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ABSTRACT

This student text and teacher's guide feature current events and policy issues that are in discussion today. The books offer background on important domestic and foreign policy issues and present arguments from both sides of key issues. The books are divided into three sections. Section 1, "The Federal Government," contains: (1) "The Clinton Administration"; (2) "The 106th Congress"; and (3) "The Supreme Court." Section 2, "Domestic Policy Issues," includes: (1) "The Federal Budget"; (2) "Constitutional Rights"; (3) "Crime and Drugs"; (4) "The Economy"; (5) "Education"; (6) "Health Care and Aging"; (7) "Immigration"; (8) "The Media"; (9) "Poverty"; and (10) "Women and Minorities." Section 3, "Foreign Policy Issues," contains: (1) "Defense"; (2) "Democracy and Human Rights"; (3) "The Global Environment"; (4) "International Trade"; (5) "Weapons Proliferation"; (6) "World Poverty and Foreign Aid"; (7) "East Asia"; (8) "Europe and Russia"; (9) "Latin America"; and (10) "The Middle East." A 60-item list of books and articles that provide further information and perspectives on many of the topics covered is given. The teacher's guide contains lesson plans for each unit. Also included are unit test materials, unit test answers, and student handouts. (LB)

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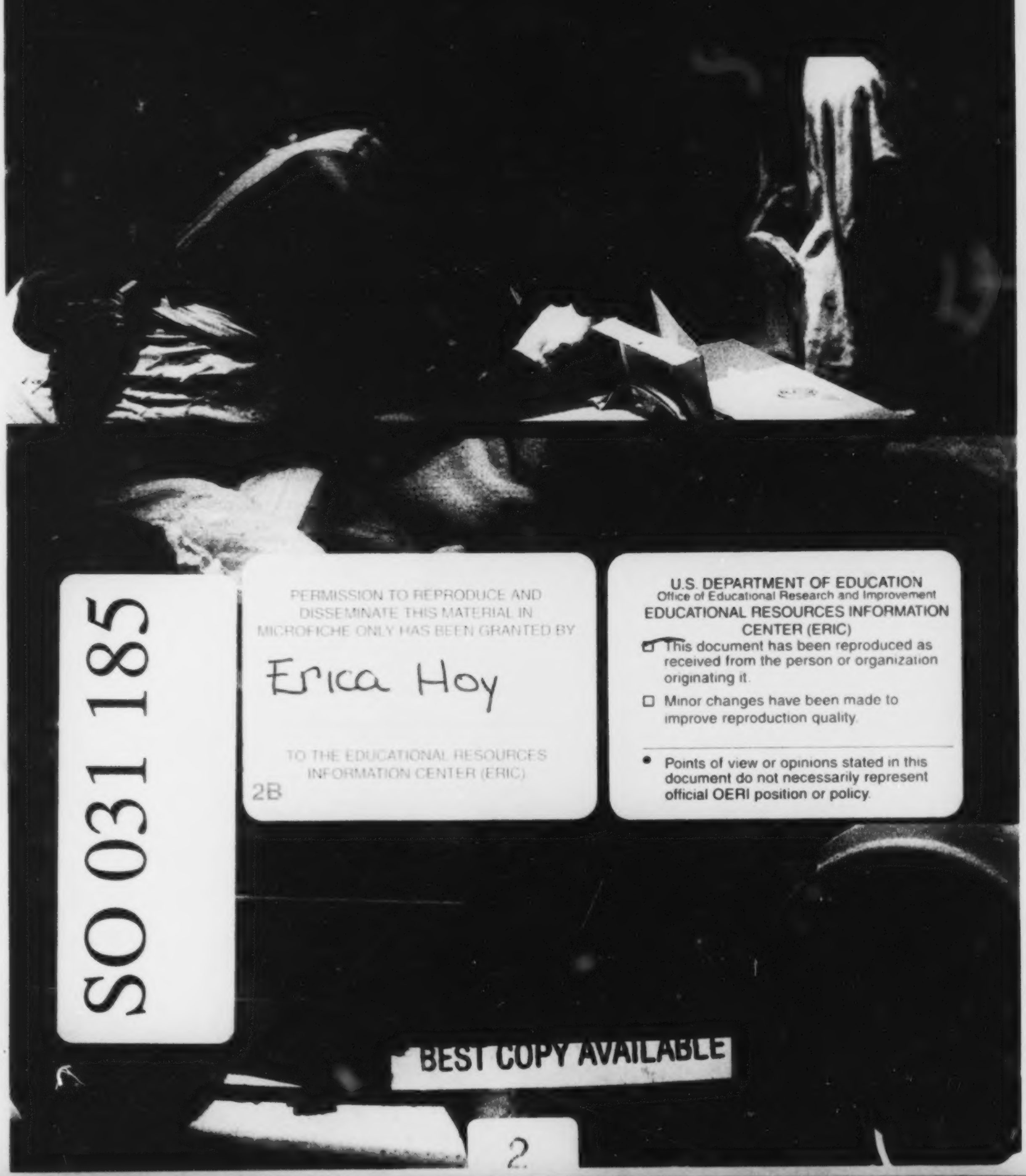
Critical Policy Choices Facing the Nation and the World



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PREFACE

This book is about policy issues—matters being discussed and debated by U.S. citizens and their lawmakers. Today, Americans receive an unprecedented amount of information about national and international affairs. Much of this information is intended to convince people to believe a certain way. *Current Issues,* now in its twenty-third edition, takes a different approach. In twenty chapters about domestic policy and foreign policy issues, this book informs its readers about some of today's important concerns but leaves judgments up to the individual. Each chapter provides basic background information, identifies key questions, and details arguments from differing points of view.

The topics were chosen because they are part of public policy debate in the United States today. Americans are discussing these problems in their communities, in their state capitals, and in Washington, D.C. That dialogue is at the heart of *Current Issues.*

Nothing is more important to the democratic form of government in the United States than the informed participation of its citizens in the political process. *Current Issues* is designed to support greater civic participation by ensuring that when it comes time for this book's readers to participate in an election, state an opinion, or take a stand on an issue, they will do so from an informed perspective.

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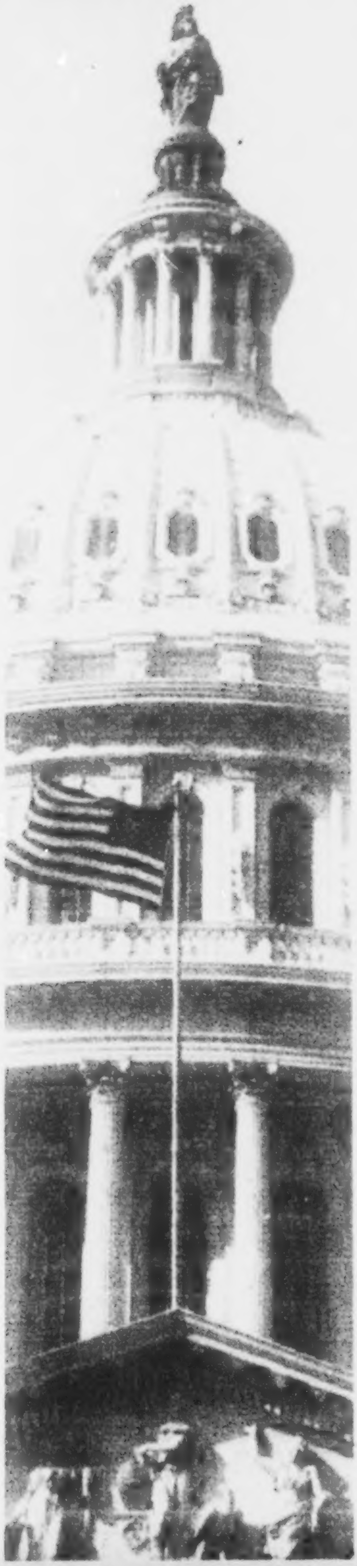
The Federal Government



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INTRODUCTION

The United States is a republic, with democratically elected representatives who deal with the day-to-day workings of government. Government officials constantly make decisions about important issues. As policymakers, they devise plans for addressing the nation's needs and for conducting relations with other countries. The process for dealing with such domestic and foreign issues is called public policy. Developing public policy is the government's way of meeting national goals, such as defending the country, protecting the environment, and improving access to health care. In the United States, the three branches of federal government—executive, legislative, and judicial—play different, but interrelated, roles in making and implementing public policy.

The executive branch, which includes the president, cabinet departments, and federal agencies, has the constitutional duty to carry out the laws of the United States. But the executive branch also initiates policies, represented, for example, by the budget the president sends to Congress. After Congress has approved and funded the president's proposals, the administration (another name for the executive branch) executes them.

The legislative branch—Congress—is primarily charged with making public policy. The Constitution gives senators and representatives—the nation's lawmakers—the power to formulate defense, trade, and other policies, as well as the power to raise and allocate funds to implement such decisions. Congressional committees monitor the executive branch to make sure that the president, cabinet departments, and federal agencies are carrying out policies as Congress intended.

The judicial branch, which is made up of the Supreme Court and lower federal courts, settles disputes involving citizens and federal, state, and local governments where a federal question is involved. Federal courts interpret the U.S. Constitution as well as the nation's laws and treaties. The Supreme Court can, in effect, change public policy decisions by ruling that certain laws, regulations, or practices are unconstitutional. Decisions of the Supreme Court usually stand as the law of the land unless the Court later overturns a decision or the Constitution is amended in a way that nullifies an earlier Court decision.

The federal government's priorities constantly change to reflect the needs of the country and the wishes of the electorate. Together, the Republican-controlled Congress and President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, will pass laws dealing with many domestic public policy issues. However, when the legislative and executive branches of government are controlled by opposing parties, finding a consensus is almost always a challenge. At the same time, the search for agreement among the branches is a good example of the Constitution's time-honored system of checks and balances.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

Americans vote for president and vice president on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November of every leap year. Both are inaugurated (sworn into office) at 12:00 noon on the following January 20. President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore began their first term in 1993 and their second term in 1997. The U.S. Constitution limits the president to two terms in office.

President

The White House

William (Bill) Clinton, age 53, is the forty-second president. In his second term in office, the president has worked with Congress to balance the budget and improve education. Investigations by an independent counsel into possible wrongdoing by the president distracted his administration in 1998. In December of that year, Bill Clinton became the first president since Andrew Johnson in 1868 to be impeached by the House of Representatives, but he was later acquitted by the Senate. In March 1999, the president ordered U.S. airstrikes against Yugoslavia.

Vice President

The White House

Albert Gore Jr., age 51, was a U.S. representative from Tennessee for eight years beginning in 1976 and served in the U.S. Senate from 1984 to 1993. One of President Clinton's most trusted and closest advisers, Vice President Gore often serves as spokesman for the president on national security matters and represents the administration overseas. While continuing to be an important adviser to the president on all issues, Vice President Gore spent much of his time in 1999 preparing his campaign for the 2000 Democratic presidential nomination.

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CABINET

There are currently fourteen Cabinet departments, each headed by a presidential appointee. President George Washington's first cabinet was made up of the secretaries of state, treasury, and war (now defense), and the attorney general. Cabinet members are listed here in chronological order of the creation of their departments.

Secretary of State

U.S. Mission to the United Nations

Madeleine Albright, age 61, was the first woman to be appointed secretary of state. She served as ambassador to the United Nations from 1993 to 1997 before replacing Warren Christopher. As the nation's top diplomat, Secretary Albright travels the world, helping keep the Middle East peace process alive, negotiating with Chinese leaders over human rights, and seeking solutions to the ongoing dispute with Iraq. In early 1999, Albright tried to persuade Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to sign a peace accord ending the conflict in Kosovo. Milosevic's defiance led to NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia.

Secretary of the Treasury

U.S. Department of Treasury

In May 1999, President Clinton named Lawrence Summers to replace Robert Rubin as secretary of the treasury. Summers, age 44, had been deputy secretary since 1995. Before joining the Clinton administration, Summers served as chief economist at the World Bank and as a professor of economics at Harvard University. In his new role, Secretary Summers is expected to continue the policies of the highly regarded Rubin, as the United States looks for ways to improve the world economy.

Secretary of Defense

U.S. Department of Defense

William Cohen, age 58, became secretary of defense in January 1997. Before taking over administration of the Pentagon, Cohen, a Republican, was a U.S. senator from Maine for eighteen years and served on the Senate Armed Services Committee. The defense secretary has been an important presidential adviser on many national security issues, including defense restructuring and the necessity for a missile defense system. Secretary Cohen supervised U.S. military actions in Iraq and Yugoslavia.

Attorney General

U.S. Department of Justice

Before being named to head the Department of Justice, Janet Reno, age 60, was the state attorney for Dade County, Florida, for fifteen years. As chief prosecutor there, she won praise for reforming the juvenile justice system and establishing a special court for drug offenders. The longest-serving U.S. attorney general of the twentieth century, Reno has requested the appointment of several independent counsels to investigate possible wrongdoing by members of the Clinton administration. However, she faced criticism for her refusal to appoint another independent counsel to look into White House fundraising during the 1996 presidential campaign.

Secretary of the Interior

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bruce Babbitt, age 60, was governor of Arizona for nine years. As secretary of the interior, he oversees 500 million acres of national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and recreation areas. Babbitt supports a "dominant public use" policy for the nation's public lands, which gives priority to recreation, wildlife, and watershed uses. Babbitt has been at the forefront of the Clinton administration's efforts to explain to the American people the value of having strong conservation and environmental protection laws.

Secretary of Agriculture

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dan Glickman, age 54, became secretary of agriculture in April 1995. Before being named to the Clinton Cabinet, Glickman served nine terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. While representing his Kansas district, he was an influential member of the House Agriculture and Intelligence Committees. Secretary Glickman has been active in persuading Congress to grant aid to farmers who have been hurt by the depressed U.S. farm economy and devastating droughts.

Secretary of Commerce

Consolidated News/Archive Photos

Before being named secretary of commerce in 1997, William Daley, age 51, was a top political adviser to his brother, Chicago mayor Richard Daley. In 1993, William Daley helped President Clinton win congressional approval for the North American Free Trade Agreement. He also served as co-chairman of the host committee for the 1996 Democratic National Committee. Secretary Daley has been lauded by many business leaders for revitalizing an agency that had been tarnished by alleged connections to campaign fundraising improprieties in 1996.

Secretary of Labor

U.S. Department of Labor

Alexis Herman, age 52, was director of the White House Office of Public Liaison before being appointed secretary of labor in President Clinton's second term. Secretary Herman believes that the United States must "train and retrain" workers so that the nation can compete in the new technology-dominated and information-based global economy. In May 1998, Attorney General Reno asked an independent counsel to investigate Herman for her role in soliciting illegal campaign donations while she served in the Office of Public Liaison.

Secretary of Health and Human Services

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Donna Shalala, age 57, was chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison from 1988 to 1993. She was also assistant secretary for housing and urban development from 1977 to 1980 and chair of the Children's Defense Fund in 1992. Secretary Shalala heads a huge department that oversees highly visible and expensive programs, such as Social Security and Medicare. Her top priorities in the final two years of the Clinton administration will be keeping these two programs solvent and reducing teen drug use in America.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Before being named to the Cabinet by President Clinton, Andrew Cuomo, age 41, served as assistant secretary for community planning and development at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from 1993 to 1996. In that post, he was in charge of a wide variety of economic development, affordable housing, and homeless programs. The son of former New York governor Mario Cuomo, the secretary also directed a New York City commission to study the homeless problem. During his tenure at HUD, he has been an outspoken advocate of anticrime and antipoverty programs.

Secretary of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation

Rodney Slater, age 44, served as the administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) before being appointed secretary of transportation. The FHA, which is part of the Department of Transportation, is responsible for ensuring the safety of highways and bridges. A longtime political ally of President Clinton, Secretary Slater was previously chairman of the Arkansas State Highway Commission and a member of the presidential transition team.

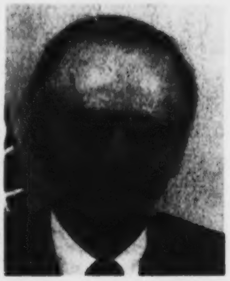
Secretary of Energy

Prior to being chosen by President Clinton to be the new secretary of energy in June 1998, Bill Richardson, age 51, served as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives before that. Secretary Richardson believes two of his department's main challenges are tightening security around U.S. nuclear research facilities and exploring ways the United States can become less dependent on foreign oil.

U.S. Mission to the United Nations

Secretary of Education

Richard Riley, age 66, was the governor of South Carolina from 1979 to 1987. In 1984, Riley worked to improve his state's schools by adding a one-cent sales tax. The secretary has stated to Congress and the American people President Clinton's positions on such issues as college loans and school choice. Secretary Riley believes strongly in setting education standards and improving the performance of American teachers.


U.S. Department of Education

Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Togo West Jr., age 57, became the secretary of veterans affairs in 1998, replacing Jesse Brown. Prior to becoming secretary of one of the largest Cabinet departments, West served four years as secretary of the army. As the civilian chief of the nation's largest military branch, West earned praise for confronting and investigating charges of sexual discrimination and harassment in the army.

Reuters/Mike Theiler/Archive Photos

KEY PRESIDENTIAL ADVISERS

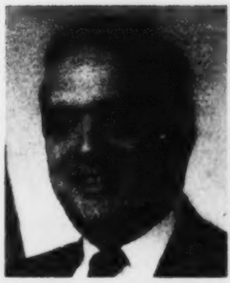
Along with Cabinet secretaries, other important officials serve as key advisers to the president. Although technically not members of the Cabinet, presidents commonly give Cabinet status to some advisers. Several of the following advisers head large agencies or represent the United States in important international settings.

White House Chief of Staff

The White House

John Podesta, age 49, replaced Erskine Bowles as White House chief of staff in November 1998. Podesta had been deputy chief. Before joining the Clinton administration, he was an attorney, law professor, and public relations professional in Washington, D.C. As chief of staff, Podesta is responsible for coordinating legislative and communication strategies for the president as well as advising him on key appointments. Chief of Staff Podesta's first challenge was to navigate the White House through the tumultuous impeachment proceedings in late 1998 and early 1999.

Director of Central Intelligence



U.S. Central Intelligence Agency

George Tenet, age 46, was picked by President Clinton to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) after serving as its deputy director. Previously, Tenet served on the National Security Council and before that worked for a decade on Capitol Hill as a Senate staffer. Tenet's top priority as CIA director has been to monitor the movements of known terrorists and the development of nuclear weapons programs in rogue nations.

Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental Protection Agency

Carol Browner, age 43, served as secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation before being appointed to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1993. The EPA works with state and local governments to determine and enforce safe pollution levels. Browner has helped negotiate a plan to save wetlands by restricting development in those areas. She also advocates placing tighter restrictions on air pollution standards for automobiles and requiring water companies to inform consumers of chemicals and potential health hazards in their drinking water.

Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Louis Freeh, age 49, is only the fifth person to head the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in its seventy-year history. The FBI is part of the Department of Justice. Appointed by President Clinton in 1993, Freeh, a former FBI agent, gave up a judgeship on the U.S. District Court in New York to accept the ten-year term at the FBI. One of Director Freeh's top priorities in 1998 and 1999 was the search for fugitive Alan Rudolph, a suspect in bombings at abortion clinics and at Atlanta's Olympic Park in 1996.

Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Reuters/Debbie Morello/Archive Photos

In April 1998, President Clinton named Jack Lew, age 44, to replace Franklin Raines as director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Lew has served in the administration since 1993, first as special assistant to the president and then as deputy director of OMB. A native of New York City, Lew was a congressional aide and an attorney before joining the administration. As director of OMB, Lew has been negotiating with members of Congress over how to use the projected federal budget surplus.

National Security Adviser

The White House

Samuel (Sandy) Berger, age 52, served as deputy national security adviser from 1993 to 1996 before replacing Anthony Lake in the top spot in 1997. In the late 1970s, Berger worked at the State Department during the Carter administration, where he wrote speeches for President Jimmy Carter and Secretary of State Edmund Muskie. Besides helping define defense strategy, Berger often publicly states the goals of the administration's military efforts, including those in the Balkans and the Persian Gulf.

U.S. Trade Representative

Office of U.S. Trade Representative

Charlene Barshefsky, age 48, became U.S. trade representative in 1997. She was a lawyer in Washington, D.C., before being named deputy trade representative in 1993. Barshefsky is working to decrease the U.S. trade deficit with other nations as well as expand existing trade agreements with Latin America. In 1999, she negotiated with Chinese officials on the terms for admitting China into the World Trade Organization.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Reuters/HO/Archive Photos

U.S. Army general Henry Hugh Shelton, age 57, was named by President Clinton to succeed General John Shalikashvili as chairman of the military's joint chiefs in 1998. Shelton serves as the president's senior military adviser. A decorated combat veteran in Vietnam and a commander in Operation Desert Storm, General Shelton led the multinational force sent to Haiti in 1994 and helped coordinate Operation Allied Force in the Balkans in 1999.

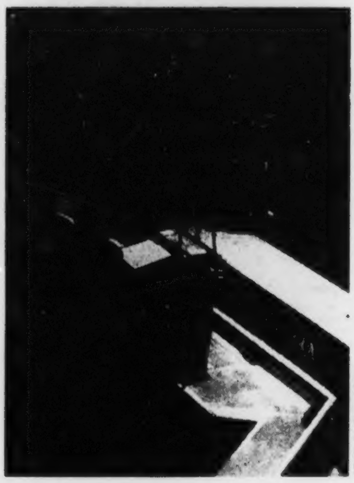
White House Press Secretary

The White House

Joe Lockhart, age 40, replaced Mike McCurry as White House Press Secretary in July 1998, after serving as deputy press secretary for two years. As press secretary, he conducts daily press briefings and is often called upon to comment on breaking news. Lockhart had a long career in politics and journalism before joining the Clinton administration. He was a key member of the press operations for Democratic presidential candidates Walter Mondale (1984) and Michael Dukakis (1988) and worked as a broadcast journalist between campaigns.

THE 106TH CONGRESS

The framers of the Constitution divided power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches to balance the government and ensure that no powers go unchecked. Although brilliant, this design of checks and balances has on occasion been a source of tension, particularly between the executive and legislative branches. The rivalry has been more pronounced when one political party occupies the White House and another controls at least one house of Congress. Since 1995, Bill Clinton, a Democrat, has occupied the White House, while Republicans have controlled both the House of Representatives and Senate. While the president and congressional leaders point out that the two sides have worked together to pass historic legislation, most political analysts agree that President Clinton and Congress have had a highly partisan relationship over the past five years.



AP Photo/Doug Mills

A joint session of Congress meets every January to hear the president's State of the Union address. In the speech, the president tells Congress and the American people what the administration's economic, social, and foreign policies will be in the upcoming year.

In 1995 and 1996, Democrats and Republicans waged a public battle over the federal budget. Disagreements have prevented progress on issues such as campaign finance reform, tax cuts, and education policy. On other issues, including welfare reform and a balanced budget agreement, President Clinton and the Republicans in Congress were able to find common ground.

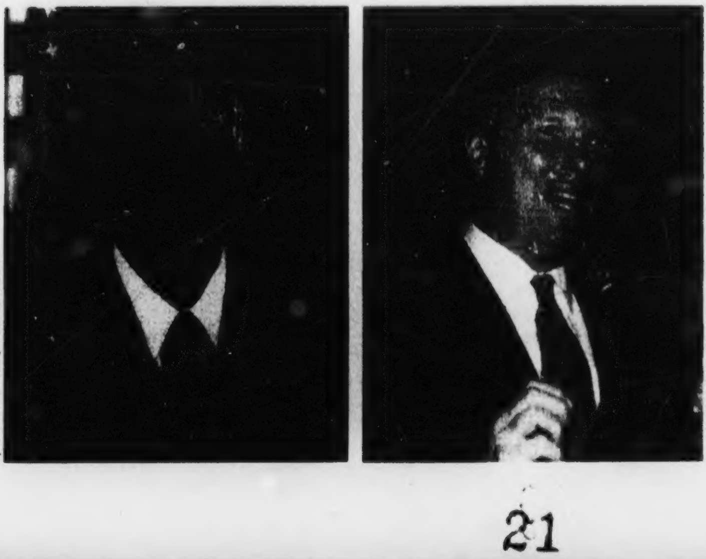
The 105th Congress will most likely be remembered for exercising a powerful constitutional weapon—impeachment. In December 1998, the House of Representatives voted to impeach President Clinton for lying under oath and obstructing justice. Although the Senate voted to acquit, the bitter partisanship surrounding the proceedings still lingered as the 106th Congress took over and, along with the White House, attempted to refocus on the nation's problems.

The Road to Impeachment

In November 1994, the Republican Party won control of both the House of Representatives and Senate for the first time in forty years. However, the Republican majority and the Clinton administration had competing agendas, which inevitably led to legislative gridlock.

In 1995 and 1996, President Clinton and the 104th Congress sparred over the budget, a dispute that shut down the federal government. However, the two sides did cooperate successfully on several important bills, including health care, welfare, and immigration reforms. In 1996, the Republican Party kept control of both houses of the 105th Congress, and President Clinton was reelected.

High Crimes and Misdemeanors? The relationship between President Clinton and Republicans in Congress deteriorated in 1998. Independent counsel Kenneth Starr was looking into the roles played by President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in a series of financial dealings during the 1980s, known collectively as Whitewater. In addition, the Senate held hearings in 1997 to examine if the Clinton campaign broke fundraising laws during the 1996 presidential campaign.



Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

In January 1999, Representative J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill., on left) became the new Speaker of the House of Representatives. Representative Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) is the minority leader. Their top responsibility is rallying support for their party's proposals in Congress.

LAST CALL FOR INDEPENDENT COUNSELS

Reuters/Win McNamee/Archive Photos

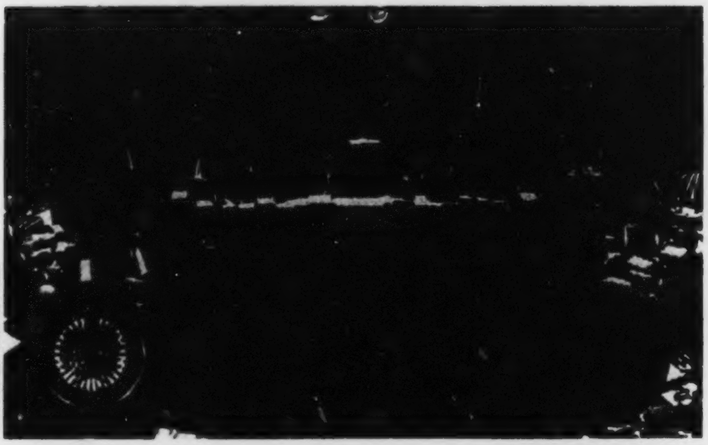
In the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, many lawmakers were concerned that White House officials could easily obstruct investigations conducted by the Justice Department. Therefore, in 1978 Congress passed the independent counsel law to prevent potential conflicts of interest in the executive branch. However, the long and expensive investigations of Lawrence Walsh, who looked into the Iran/*contra* affair in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and Kenneth Starr (pictured here) angered many citizens. Most observers predicted that Congress would not renew the independent counsel law in 1999.

In January 1998, Attorney General Janet Reno asked Starr to expand the scope of his investigation to look into President Clinton's conduct surrounding his relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Starr wanted to find out if the president encouraged Lewinsky to lie under oath about their relationship to the lawyers representing Paula Jones. Jones had earlier filed a sexual harassment civil lawsuit against President Clinton. Starr soon expanded his investigation to determine if the president himself committed perjury in the Jones case. Clinton had denied he had a sexual relationship with Lewinsky during his deposition (witness testimony taken under oath outside of court).

On August 17, 1998, President Clinton testified via closed-circuit television in front of a federal grand jury and denied that he had perjured himself in the Jones deposition. However, that evening, in a televised speech to the American people, the president admitted that he had had an "inappropriate relationship" with Lewinsky and apologized for having "misled" the public. In his defense, President Clinton's lawyers argued that his denial in the Jones deposition and to the grand jury did not fall under the strict legal guidelines of perjury.

"Abundant and Calculating Lying." In September, Starr submitted a 453-page report to the House Judiciary Committee. The report accused the president of "abundant and calculating lying" and identified eleven possible impeachable offenses. On December 11, the committee voted to recommend the impeachment of President Clinton on four counts: perjury before the grand jury, perjury in the Paula Jones civil deposition, obstruction of justice, and abuse of power. The full House passed two articles of impeachment against the president. Article I said President Clinton "willfully provided perjurious, false, and misleading testimony" before the grand jury; Article II said the president "prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice." For only the second time in U.S. history, a president of the United States had been impeached and now faced possible removal from office.

The President on Trial. In January 1999, the impeachment case moved to the Senate. Senators would hear the evidence and vote to either convict and remove Bill Clinton or acquit and allow him to serve out the rest of his term. While a simple majority in the House is needed to impeach the president, a two-thirds vote in the Senate is required for removal. Republican and Democratic leaders conceded early on that there



Reuters/Senate TV/Archive Photos

In a historic vote, the Senate acquitted President Clinton of perjury and obstruction of justice in February 1999. President Clinton was only the second president in U.S. history to be impeached by the House of Representatives. The first was Andrew Johnson in 1868.

were probably not enough votes. With this in mind, some lawmakers pushed for censure—an official rebuke of the president's actions—as an alternative.

On February 12, 1999, the Senate voted to reject both articles of impeachment against President Clinton. Two hours after the historic vote, the president appeared before the press in the White House Rose Garden. "Now that the Senate has fulfilled its constitutional responsibility, bringing this process to a conclusion," he said, "I want to say again to the American people how profoundly sorry I am for what I said and did to trigger these events and the great burden they have imposed on the Congress and on the American people."

Getting Back to "the People's Work"

Many political commentators were surprised that, in the wake of the 1998 congressional elections results, the Republicans in the House proceeded with the drive to impeach President Clinton. Although Republicans held onto their majority in both houses, most political experts viewed the results as a letdown for the party. Many had predicted that the Democrats—led by a president facing a profound political crisis—would incur major losses. However, the party actually picked up five seats in the House and held onto their forty-five seats in the Senate. Many Republicans blamed Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. Sensing he was no longer able to serve effectively as speaker, Gingrich stepped down and resigned from Congress. In December, Gingrich's designated successor, Bob Livingston, also resigned as stories about his personal life were surfacing in the press. House Republicans then turned to little-known Representative J. Dennis Hastert of Illinois to be the new speaker. Hastert was sworn in with the rest of the 106th Congress in January 1999.

After the Senate voted to acquit the president in February, congressional leaders in both parties said they were looking forward to doing "the people's work"—writing and passing legislation about important issues. However, tackling these issues was going to be difficult because of the lingering tension from the impeachment process and the deep mistrust Republicans held toward President Clinton.

A Crowded "In" Box. The 105th Congress passed 394 acts of legislation, including significant laws such as the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and NATO expansion. However, it left behind much unfinished business, including antismoking legislation, Social Security and Medicare reform, tax relief, and debt reduction. These were some of the issues the 106th Congress vowed to address. Doing so would go a long way toward restoring the legislative body's image in the eyes of the American people, many of whom disapproved of the impeachment proceedings. In addition, some lawmakers said that Congress must reform the campaign finance system to ease public cynicism.

The Money Chase. How much money a candidate is able to raise for his or her campaign largely determines how that person performs on election day. Most Americans believe that money has corrupted the electoral system and the government. When a candidate benefits from large contributions from an individual, company, or special interest, then he or she is vulnerable to undue influence.

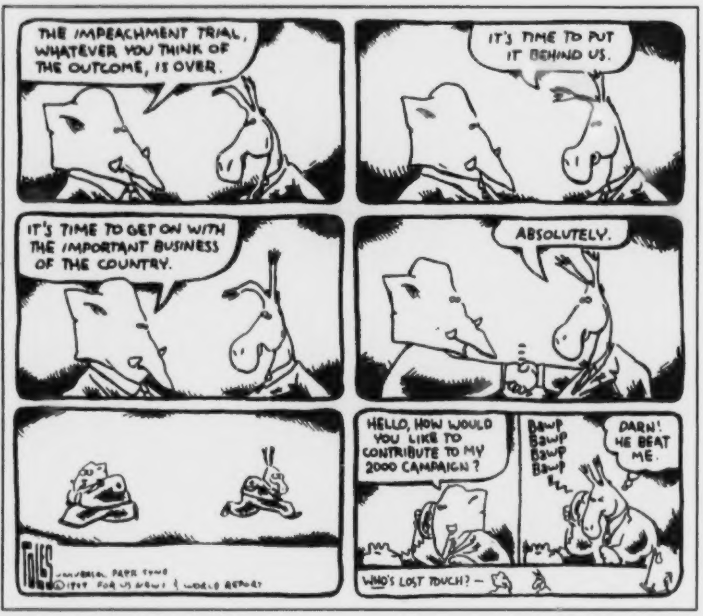
The High Cost of Campaigns. Spending on presidential and congressional campaigns has increased dramatically in the 1990s—a trend fueled by the escalating cost of television and radio advertising. Campaigns for the Senate can run up a bill of up to $30 million. Many believe that a presidential candidate needs more than $50 million to run an effective campaign. Lawmakers who are running for reelection must devote much of their time in office to soliciting funds. Their aim is to build an expansive campaign "war chest" that will scare off potential challengers who cannot raise as much money. As a result, voters have fewer choices.

The Influence of PACs. Political Action Committees (PACs) are political organizations through which special interest groups contribute money to campaigns. Experts estimate that there are now more than 4,000 PACs representing various business, labor, or ideological interests. Critics argue that the money these groups contribute buys too much influence with lawmakers. Many Americans favor abolishing PACs and instituting new regulations for campaign fundraising. Others say such an act would infringe on citizens' rights to participate in American democracy.

"Soft" Money. In 1907, Congress passed the Tillman Act, which prohibited corporations and national banks from contributing money to federal campaigns (presidential and congressional). Until the 1970s, however, Congress did little to further regulate campaign financing. In 1974, in response to Watergate-related campaign abuses, Congress passed a law that limited the political contributions from individuals and PACs to no more than $1,000 to a candidate per election and no more than $20,000 to a political party per year.

However, candidates for national office have been able to get around these restrictions with what is called "soft" money—contributions by individuals, corporations, and unions to "nonfederal" accounts of national political parties. The national party committees transfer this money to state party accounts. State party organizations then spend this money on activities ranging from television advertising to voter registration. They say the money is used to promote the party, not the candidate, thereby avoiding contribution restrictions. Many have called upon Congress to ban soft money, arguing that, while it technically obeys the letter of campaign finance laws, it makes a mockery of the spirit of those laws.

The Impossible Dream? Congress has debated some form of campaign finance reform in almost every legislative session for the last twenty years. Critics say that officeholders are unlikely to change campaign finance laws in ways that would reduce their campaign money and jeopardize their own reelection.


THE IMPEACHMENT TRIAL, WHATEVER YOU THINK OF THE OUTCOME, IS OVER.
IT'S TIME TO PUT IT BEHIND US.
IT'S TIME TO GET ON WITH THE IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF THE COUNTRY.
ABSOLUTELY.
HELLO, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO MY 2000 CAMPAIGN?
BAWP BAWP BAWP BAWP
DARN! HE BEAT ME.
WHO'S LOST TOUCH? —
TOLES
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The most recent prominent reform proposal was the McCain-Feingold bill, named after Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Russell Feingold (D-Wis.). Introduced in 1996, this bipartisan bill proposed banning PACs and soft money. Instead, candidates would abide by voluntary spending limits, with reduced media costs (free television and radio airtime, for example) as an incentive for compliance. Senator McCain said the bill was necessary to fix a system he called "a national embarrassment." In 1998, the House passed the measure, 252 to 179, but it died in the Senate, where proponents were unable to muster the 60 votes needed to prevent opponents from mounting a filibuster (obstructionist tactics, usually long speeches, that attempt to block action on legislation).

The defeat of the McCain-Feingold bill led many observers to predict that it would take a national political scandal on the level of Watergate to bring about changes in the way money is raised in election campaigns. Supporters of McCain-Feingold have vowed to reintroduce new proposals in the 106th Congress. However, with so many other important issues on their plate, members of Congress may decide that campaign finance reform will have to wait.

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THE SUPREME COURT

The framers of the Constitution wanted to create a strong central government. At the same time, they feared that individuals or groups might acquire too much power. Accordingly, the delegates divided the powers of government among three separate branches. The legislative branch makes laws, the executive branch enforces laws, and the judicial branch—with the Supreme Court of the United States as its ultimate authority—interprets laws and the Constitution.

Justices for Life

Supreme Court justices are appointed by the president with the "advice and consent" of the Senate. These justices serve on the Court for life, unless they resign or are removed through impeachment. The nine justices of the Supreme Court primarily serve as an appellate court; they review a limited number of appeals arising from decisions made by lower federal and state courts. Cases that are approved for review usually present unusual or significant legal issues. The Court hears cases that involve the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States.

Decisions of the nation's highest court have played a major role in shaping U.S. political and social life. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Earl Warren, made sweeping changes in individual rights. For example, the Warren Court struck down racial segregation and government-sponsored prayer in public schools.

When Warren Burger became chief justice in 1969, the Supreme Court extended some decisions of the Warren Court. For instance, the Burger Court approved busing to achieve racial integration of public schools, upheld affirmative action, and ruled that women have the right to choose abortion. However, under Chief Justice Burger, the Supreme Court also limited some of the decisions made by the Court under Earl Warren. For example, the Warren Court had established strict procedures for police to follow to ensure that the rights of suspected criminals were not violated. But the Burger Court ruled that law enforcement authorities may commit minor, unintentional violations of some constitutional rights without penalty, thus preventing some criminals from going free.

Presidents and the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court underwent major changes during the Reagan and Bush administrations. During his eight years in office, President Ronald Reagan named three new associate justices and a chief justice. In 1981, President Reagan appointed Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court, as an associate justice. In 1986, Reagan named Associate Justice William Rehnquist to replace Chief Justice Warren Burger, who retired, and chose Antonin Scalia as an associate justice. President Reagan appointed Anthony Kennedy to the Court in 1987.

President George Bush also influenced the composition of the Supreme Court. In 1990, Bush appointed David Souter as an associate justice. The following year, he named the Court's second black justice, Clarence Thomas, to replace the retiring Thurgood Marshall—the first black justice.

Shortly after taking office in 1993, President Bill Clinton appointed Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a former American Civil Liberties Union lawyer and judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals, to replace retiring justice Byron White. Justice Ginsburg is the Court's second female justice and the first Jewish justice since 1969. In 1994, Clinton selected federal appeals court judge Stephen Breyer to fill the seat of the retiring Harry Blackmun. Some expect that President Clinton may have the opportunity to name another

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

The Supreme Court building, styled after a classic Grecian temple, was completed in 1935 at a cost of $3 million. Prior to that, dating back to 1789 when the Court was created, the justices had met in various rooms of the Capitol.

Supreme Court Historical Society

Supreme Court justices, from left to right: Antonin Scalia, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, John Paul Stevens, David Souter, William Rehnquist, Clarence Thomas, Sandra Day O'Connor, Stephen Breyer, Anthony Kennedy

justice to the Court before his second term ends. These appointments can be one of the most lasting marks that a president leaves, because the decisions made by these men and women can have such an enduring and significant impact on the nation.

Supreme Court appointments are often controversial, however, because of the power that the Court wields. Liberals and conservatives generally have conflicting ideas about the philosophies they think a Supreme Court justice should hold. Conservatives, in general, prefer justices who favor strict interpretations of the Constitution, which they believe the framers intended. In contrast, liberals often want justices who will allow for broader interpretations of the Constitution to suit changing circumstances, as they think the framers had planned.

Recent Important Decisions

In the 1997/98 term, the Supreme Court issued several important rulings. In a 6 to 3 decision, the Court struck down the line-item veto, which had given the president the authority to cancel specific items in spending and tax bills. The Court upheld the attorney-client privilege after death, which ensures that lawyers cannot be forced to reveal their clients' confidences even after the client dies. Ending a long battle over public funding for the arts, the justices ruled 8 to 1 that the federal government can consider standards of decency and the "values of the American public" in distributing cash grants for projects. And in a closely divided, 5 to 4 decision, the majority found that all people who are HIV-positive are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places that serve the public.

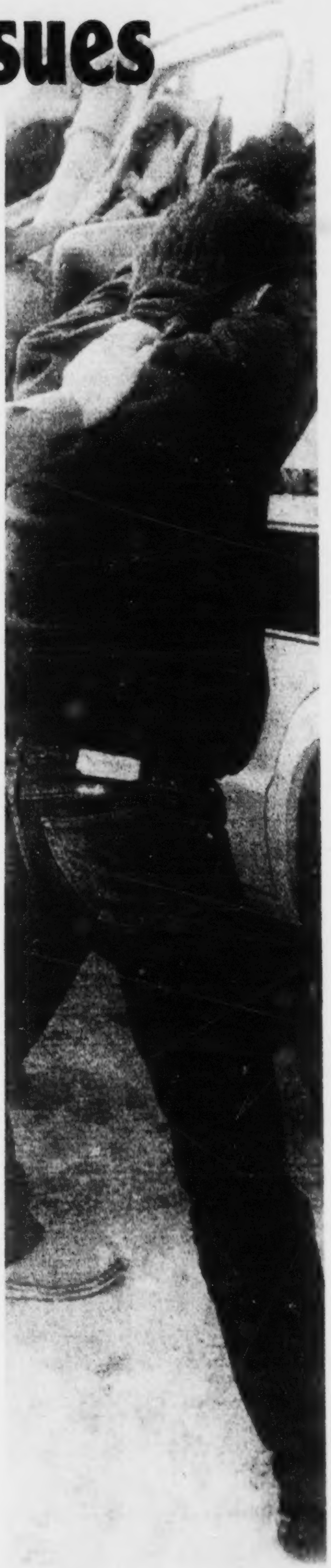
During the 1998/99 term, the Supreme Court ruled that school districts must furnish certain medical services for disabled students attending public schools. The Court also ruled that statistical sampling as a means of national census-taking is illegal for reapportionment purposes. The Supreme Court justices were scheduled to hear arguments on other controversial constitutional issues, including

- whether California can offer fewer welfare benefits to newcomers until they have been in the state for a year, as part of an effort to discourage poor families from moving to the state
- in a series of cases, how far the police can be empowered in searching and seizing a suspect's property
- whether a state's limits on citizens' political campaign contributions violate First Amendment rights

A COURT OF IMPEACHMENT

In February 1999, President Bill Clinton became the second United States president ever to be impeached by the House of Representatives. Though he was eventually acquitted, the president's impeachment trial made international headlines and became a national obsession. As set forth in Article 1, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist presided over the Senate trial. Though his duties were more ceremonial than legal, Rehnquist's presence on the floor of the Senate lent a somber, serious air to the proceedings. More than 130 years before, Chief Justice Salmon Chase presided over similar hearings—at the impeachment trial of the nation's seventeenth president, Andrew Johnson. Johnson, like Clinton, was acquitted.

Domestic Policy Issues



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INTRODUCTION

American men and women are always concerned about domestic public policy issues. National matters such as education, unemployment, crime, health care, and poverty affect practically every person living in the United States. Voters usually place a greater emphasis on domestic issues over foreign issues when deciding what candidate to vote for in a presidential or congressional election.

Government—be it at the local, state, or federal level—plays a major role in formulating domestic policy. Each year, lawmakers face difficult decisions about the level of government involvement in the lives of the people they represent. Of course, the U.S. Constitution sets limits. The First Amendment, for example, protects individuals from government interference by guaranteeing freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. However, Americans disagree about how broad these protections are and how many limits the government should place on people's rights. Policymakers seek to balance the rights of citizens with the requirement to preserve public order.

For the first 150 years of the republic, the federal government was relatively uninvolved in the day-to-day activities of the American people. Decisions about everyday life were left to state and local governments and to the people directly. But the Great Depression of the 1930s led to a radically changed role for the federal government. President Franklin Roosevelt and Congress established programs to help needy Americans who faced hunger and poverty. Eventually the government in Washington took over many of the responsibilities formerly assumed by state and local governments.

Further changes occurred during the 1960s, when President Lyndon Johnson launched a national effort to eliminate poverty and discrimination. Federal programs were established to provide needy citizens with education, jobs, medical care, food, and housing.

Congress passed civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in education, housing, public accommodations, and voting. In the 1970s, lawmakers involved the federal government in energy and environmental issues.

Many Americans believe that only the federal government is capable of resolving major national issues. They think that only the president, Congress, and the Supreme Court have enough power to ensure that factories will not pollute the air, that health care is more accessible, and that all citizens will receive fair and equal treatment in education, housing, and employment. Many people see government regulation of certain aspects of American life as a necessity.

Since the role of the federal government began expanding in the 1930s, however, many Americans have contended that Washington has become too bureaucratic and inefficient and too involved in their lives. They believe that the federal government uses its power to make decisions that should be made by states, communities, and individuals. In the 1990s, the public's discontent with the federal government deepened. Congress began passing legislation that gave state governments more power over programs that traditionally had been the domain of the federal government.

How can the United States stop the cycle of poverty? How can the nation's health care system be improved? Should restrictions on immigration be tightened? These and other domestic policy questions pose constant challenges for the president, members of Congress, governors, and all citizens from Maine to Hawaii.

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THE FEDERAL BUDGET

During much of the 1990s, lawmakers in Washington, political commentators, and economists everywhere debated ways to reduce the federal government's debt. With annual deficits as high as $290 billion and the national debt in the trillions, the American public demanded that their elected officials restore fiscal responsibility in Washington. Beginning in 1993, President Bill Clinton and Republicans in Congress would, over the next four years, fight a spirited and tense battle over how to balance the budget—a debate that literally brought the government to a standstill in 1996.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the budget surplus be used to reduce the national debt?
- Should Social Security be privatized?
- Should "corporate welfare" be eliminated?

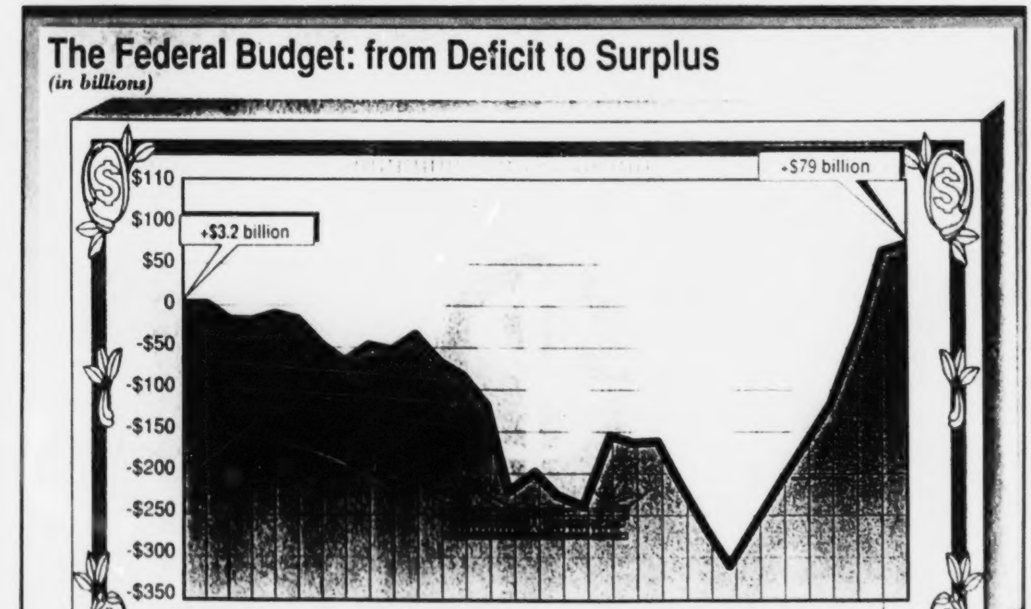
In June 1997, the two sides agreed on a plan to balance the budget by 2002. But by that time, the thriving U.S. economy was already chopping away at the deficit. In February 1998, President Clinton sent to Congress the first balanced budget in almost thirty years. One year later, the White House and the Congressional Budget Office projected that the federal government would produce surpluses totaling $4.4 trillion over the next fifteen years. Few lawmakers would have predicted in 1992, when the deficit hit $290 billion, that the U.S. government would be running a surplus six years later.

However, earlier disagreements over how to reduce the deficit have given way to recent clashes over what to do with the surplus. Many in Congress are calling for tax cuts or more spending on social programs to give something back to the American people. Some insist that the surplus be used to pay down the national debt and fortify the Social Security system. Others warn that a sudden, unforeseen downturn in the economy could erase any surplus before it can be spent.

BACKGROUND

Budget Deficits and the National Debt

A Government Beyond Its Means. After 1969, the federal government ran up budget deficits—the amount by which spending exceeds revenue—for nearly thirty years. Some years, the deficit was as low as $10 billion (1974); other years, it was as high as $290 billion (1992). Since 1969, the cost of government programs has steadily increased. In 1982, the government saw its first deficit of more than $100 billion. In 1983, the deficit jumped to more than $200 billion and remained near or above that until 1996 when it began falling dramatically. Fiscal year 1998 was the first year since Richard Nixon first took office that the federal government took in more than it spent.



The federal budget deficit or surplus measures the difference between the amount of money the government takes in and the amount of money it spends each year. Fiscal year 1998 produced a surplus for the first time since 1969.

While experts gave some credit for this turnabout to the deficit reduction plans approved by Congress and the White House, most said the drop was more likely the result of a growing American economy that was producing more tax revenue than expected. However, these same experts warn that the balanced budget could be short-lived, as spending on entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare increases or if the economy falters.

The National Debt. Every annual budget deficit contributed to the accumulation of national debt. The national debt is the sum of the government's borrowing from the U.S. population, foreign governments, and lending institutions. So even though the budget is now balanced, the United States still has a huge national debt of about $5.5 trillion. Many members of Congress favor using budget surpluses to reduce that debt.

Mortgaging the Future. Although budget deficits and the national debt have been around for decades, it was not until 1992 that the American public began to pay much attention to the problem. In the 1980s, the U.S. economy was growing, and unemployment and inflation were low. Few paid attention to the swelling federal budget deficit and national debt. In 1980, the national debt was slightly less than $1 trillion; by the end of the decade, it had tripled. Increases in defense spending and the continued growth of social programs outpaced the expansion of the economy.

When the U.S. economy fell into recession in 1990 and remained sluggish over the next two years, the issue of the deficit moved to the center of public debate. In 1992, people began to become more aware of the effect that deficits and debt have on the economy and the country.

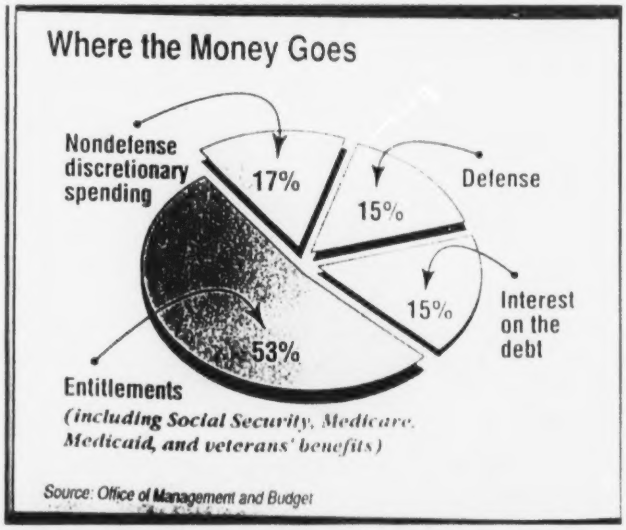
Deficits can undermine the economy in a number of ways. To cover the government's debts, the U.S. Treasury must borrow money that businesses and corporations could have otherwise borrowed to invest in the economy through research and development, job training, and expansion. In addition, when the government borrows, it is competing with other borrowers, such as individuals and businesses. As a result, this competition drives up interest rates, thereby making it more expensive for Americans to borrow for private investment.

Generational Responsibility. Economists point out that by dampening investment, deficits harm future generations the most. As the debt undermines the country's economy, Americans in the twenty-first century may not enjoy the same standard of living as previous generations. Thus, many argue that lawmakers must be vigilant in balancing the budget every year and paying off the national debt to preserve the "American Dream" for their children and grandchildren.

Breaking Down the Federal Budget. The federal government will spend about $1.7 trillion on hundreds of programs and dozens of agencies in fiscal year 1999. The budget pays for space exploration, natural disaster emergency relief, highway construction, peacekeeping operations overseas, food stamps for low-income Americans, the maintenance of national parks, and many other programs.

Government spending is divided into four main categories: defense, nondefense discretionary, mandatory, and interest on the national debt. In 1999, defense spending will consume about $265 billion. Nondefense discretionary spending—about $317 billion—pays for all the programs in the budget whose funding is adjusted by the president and Congress every year.

Mandatory, or entitlement, spending covers programs including Social Security,


Where the Money Goes

Source: Office of Management and Budget

The federal government will spend about $1.7 trillion in fiscal year 1999.

The Federal Budget

In February 1999, President Clinton submitted a budget to Congress for fiscal year 2000 (FY00) totaling about $1.8 trillion. The budget also estimates spending for FY01.

(outlays in billions of dollars)

	FY99	FY00	FY01
National defense	$ 277	$ 274	$ 282
International affairs	15	16	17
General science, space, and technology	19	19	19
Energy	*	-2	-1
Natural resources and environment	24	24	24
Agriculture	21	15	13
Commerce and housing credit	*	6	8
Transportation	43	46	49
Community and regional development	10	10	10
Education, training, employment, and social services	60	63	68
Health	143	152	163
Medicare	205	217	231
Income security	243	258	267
Social Security	393	409	427
Veterans' benefits and services	44	44	45
Administration of justice	24	28	29
General government	15	14	15
Net interest	243	227	215
Allowances	3	3	-27
Undistributed offsetting receipts (civilian retirement contributions and income earned from leasing or sale of government assets)	-40	-46	-45
Totals**	1,727	1,766	1,799

*$500 million or less

**Note: Discrepancies may occur due to rounding of budget figures.

Spending that is shown as a minus sign means that receipts exceed outlays.

Source: Office of Management and Budget

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Medicare, and Medicaid, which by law the government is obligated to fund. Such programs are called entitlements because anyone who qualifies is entitled to receive benefits. Entitlements now consume about half of the federal budget. By 2040, at least one in four Americans will be over 65 years old and eligible for Social Security and Medicare benefits. This dramatic increase means that the number of people receiving benefits will greatly outnumber the Americans paying into the system. If left unchanged, entitlement programs could consume more than 70 percent of the federal budget in the next fifty years.

The fourth main category of the budget is annual interest on the national debt. Interest for fiscal year 2000 totals $227 billion. This money buys nothing; it simply pays the interest on all the money the government has had to borrow in past years to cover its deficits.

The Federal Budget Process

Each year the president and Congress prepare a budget for the federal government. They must decide how much money the government will spend on defense, health care, foreign aid, and hundreds of other federal programs. In addition, lawmakers must determine how much tax revenue the government can expect to receive and how much money it will need to borrow, if any.

The President Prepares a Budget. In the executive branch, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is responsible for drawing up the president's budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which always begins on October 1 and ends a year later on September 30. The president relies on the OMB to produce a budget that reflects the administration's priorities, be they job training, tax relief, a stronger defense, or something else. After the OMB compiles budgetary requests from the various agencies in the executive branch, it goes to the president for approval. Finally, the president submits the administration's budget to Congress no later than the first Monday in February.

Each year the Government Printing Office publishes the president's proposed budget (shown here). Budget summaries are also available on-line at the Office of Management and Budget Web site.

dent
BUDGET
BUDGET OF THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Congress Takes Over. The legislative branch plays a crucial role in the budget process. No federal agency or program can operate without receiving both approval and funding from Congress. Congress grants approval by passing an authorization bill, which states the goals of a program, the rules and regulations that Congress believes are necessary, and the amount of money that the appropriate agency can spend on that program. Then Congress must approve a separate appropriation bill, which actually gives the agency the money to run its programs. Congress is also responsible for raising money, or revenue, for the federal government. The lawmakers raise money by maintaining or increasing existing taxes and authorizing the U.S. Treasury to borrow money to make up for any difference in revenue collected and money spent.

For many years, subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees considered the budget requests of each federal agency separately and appropriated money accordingly. But until all these separate appropriations were added, members of Congress were never sure of what the "bottom line" for the entire budget would be. Critics said Congress should have determined the budget total before it started appropriating the money to agencies and departments. Thus, in 1974, Congress passed a law requiring

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the House and Senate to approve a joint budget resolution by April of each year. The resolution sets guidelines for how much the government can spend and predicts how much revenue it will collect. Later in the year, the legislators pass a second budget resolution, which reflects any recent changes in the economy and in expected revenue. If appropriations bills already passed by Congress exceed the new limits, Congress draws up a reconciliation bill to bring spending within the limits set by the second budget resolution.

From Red Ink to Black Ink

When Bill Clinton became president in 1993, he promised to cut the budget deficit, which had hit $290 billion the previous year, in half. In August 1993, Congress passed the president's deficit reduction package—a mixed bag of spending cuts and tax increases. President Clinton's campaign to persuade Congress to approve his proposal was hard fought—the first of many budget battles between the president and Republicans in Congress.

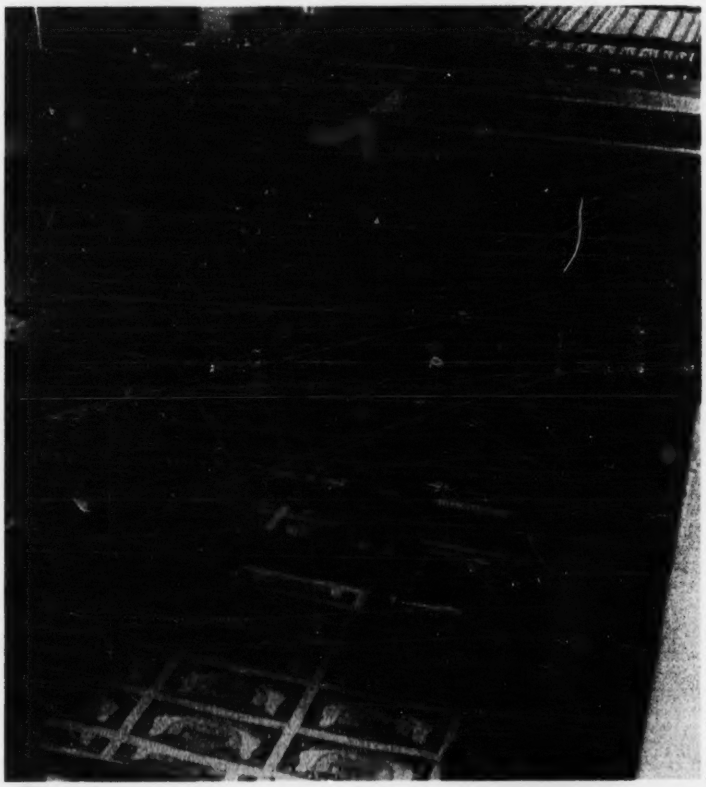
The Bumpy Road to a Balanced Budget. The Republican Party won control of Congress in 1994 and vowed to balance the budget by 2002 without raising

THE LINE-ITEM VETO: DEAD ON ARRIVAL

In 1997, President Clinton signed the Line-Item Veto Act into law. The line-item veto allows the president to cut specific items out of spending bills, instead of being forced to sign or veto an entire bill that contains a few provisions he opposes. The passage of the line-item veto would have marked a rare transfer of congressional power to the president. However, in 1998, the Supreme Court struck down the law, ruling that it violated the separation of powers defined in the Constitution. "If the Line-Item Veto Act were valid," wrote Justice John Paul Stevens, "it would authorize the president to create a different law—one whose text was not voted on by either house of Congress or presented to the president for signature."

taxes. In June 1995, President Clinton offered up his own balanced budget plan. However, the administration preferred to eliminate the deficit over the course of nine instead of seven years, giving the country more time to absorb painful spending cuts. His proposal contained fewer spending reductions in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and environmental protection, and scaled back tax cuts favored by the Republicans. Negotiations between President Clinton and Republicans in Congress came to a standstill.

The Government Shutdown. Without a budget in place by October 1, 1995—when the fiscal year officially began—the federal government shut down on November 14 for lack of money. Federal agencies sent 800,000 federal workers home. A temporary spending bill brought them back after a few days, but when funding ran out again, the government closed its doors for a second time on December 16. This standoff lasted for twenty-one days until President Clinton and the Repub-



In 1998, the federal government collected more in taxes than it spent, creating the first federal budget surplus in thirty years. Lawmakers have been debating proposals on how best to use this extra money. Shown here is money being printed.

Bureau of Engraving and Printing

licans in Congress signed another temporary spending resolution. Public outcry persuaded both sides to avoid another shutdown as they resumed negotiations. Finally, in April 1996, President Clinton and Congress agreed on a budget for fiscal year 1996. One year later, the two sides signed a historic agreement to eliminate the deficit by 2002.

The First Surplus in Thirty Years. By the time President Clinton and Congress passed the balanced budget agreement in 1997, the budget deficit was less than $100 billion and falling. The enduring strength of the economy was generating larger-than-expected tax revenues. To everyone's surprise, the budget was balanced by 1998.

Both President Clinton and Republicans in Congress claimed credit for the balanced budget, but neither side could have predicted it two years earlier. The surprising budget forecast has led to discussions in Washington about what to do with the surplus. Some policymakers believe that any surplus should be given back to the people in the form of tax cuts. Others think the extra money would be better spent either paying off the national debt or increasing spending for programs that they believe are underfunded.

CURRENT ISSUES

Spending the Surplus. In 1999, the federal government projected that the budget would run surpluses of more than $4.4 trillion over the next fifteen years. The surplus for fiscal year 1999 alone was anticipated to be around $80 billion. After decades of red ink, the federal government is faced with the luxury of deciding how to spend this extra money—quite a turnabout from the 1980s and early 1990s when huge deficits undermined the fiscal agendas of Democrats and Republicans. Nonetheless, both political parties are still having spirited debates, only this time they are debating how to use the surplus.

SURPLUS MANIA

State governments across the country were also enjoying budget surpluses in 1998 and 1999. States are using surplus funds in a variety of ways. They are investing in education, technology (specifically the year 2000 computer software problem), and new roads. However, many lawmakers argue that statehouses should be turning these surpluses into tax cuts. Some states are devoting extra moneys to "rainy day" funds that will help their citizens endure the next economic downturn. Many officials remember the rapid decline in state revenues during the economic recessions of the early 1980s and early 1990s.

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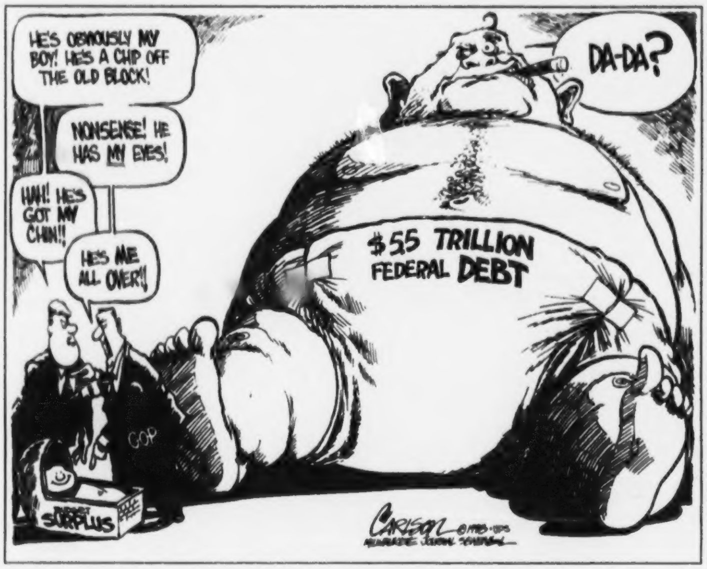
HE'S OBVIOUSLY MY BOY! HE'S A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK!
NONSENSE! HE HAS MY EYES!
HAH! HE'S GOT MY CHIN!!
HE'S ME ALL OVER!!
DA-DA?
$5.5 TRILLION FEDERAL DEBT
GOP
BUDGET SURPLUS
CARLSON
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

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President Clinton, in his 1999 State of the Union address, proposed allocating the surplus to keep Social Security and Medicare solvent for the next fifty years and to pay down the national debt. While some differ over his specific proposals for Social Security and Medicare, many do agree with the president's emphasis on reducing the debt. They believe that, despite the recent absence of deficits in the budget, the national debt—currently at $5.5 trillion—looms over the nation and needs to be addressed. Many experts contend that before the government resumes spending and tax cutting, it should first see to it that the debt is erased and no longer a threat to the economic livelihoods of future generations.

Many experts and lawmakers believe that using the surplus to pay down the debt is to squander a golden opportunity to reward the American people, whether in the form of lower taxes or higher spending on popular programs. According to Senate Budget Committee chairman Pete Domenici (R-N.Mex.), a leading proponent of tax cuts: "The American people have given us more than we need, and we should give it back to them." Others say the money could also be invested in education and the nation's infrastructure or the improvement of health care—

benefits the American people need now. Many believe tax relief and new spending initiatives would further strengthen the United States and protect it from the economic slowdown that has gripped many parts of the world.

Privatizing Social Security. Social Security—the largest federal program—has been called a "social contract" between generations. The money taken out of today's workers' paychecks supports current retirees' Social Security benefits. However, the number of older Americans is growing at a rate that will make it difficult for the program to continue to provide full benefits thirty years from now. In 1998, the Social Security Board of Trustees announced that the program's trust fund would remain solvent until 2032. However, in 2018, income from payroll taxes will become insufficient to fund the program. At that time, the government will have to begin dipping into the trust's reserves, which will extend Social Security's lifespan until 2032. To avoid being forced to reduce benefits, lawmakers are considering options to keep Social Security solvent well past that year.

In January 1999, President Clinton offered a proposal that he claimed would help save Social Security. The most controversial aspect of his plan was transferring a portion of the budget surplus to create what he called Universal Savings Accounts—government controlled individual investment accounts. These retirement accounts would be used to supplement Social Security benefits and would allow workers to choose from a menu of options, including stock and bond funds. In short, workers would invest their Social Security retirement funds in the stock market.

Some experts want the privatization of Social Security to go further and allow workers to set up individual savings accounts, while bypassing the government's role altogether. Proponents of privatization believe that, even factoring in fluctuations in the stock market, the annual returns would still be considerably higher than the present Social Security system.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Social Security has provided some financial security to retired people for more than sixty years. However, according to the Social Security Board of Trustees, the program will run out of funds by 2032.

They also contend that this plan would increase the savings rate in the United States. Supporters of Social Security privatization point out that many other countries—including Argentina, Australia, Great Britain, Italy, Mexico, and Sweden—have all implemented, in full or in part, privatized retirement pension reforms.

Opponents of privatization, on the other hand, argue that exposing retirement funds to the uncertainties of the stock market is too risky. They say the Social Security system has for more than sixty years guaranteed savings for retirees and that the program is an insurance policy, not an investment policy. Critics of privatization believe that, once the system is privatized, that special guarantee will disappear. In addition, they say those who support this radical reform assume that the American people will make informed decisions about the stock market—a shaky premise when at least 75 million working Americans have never invested in the market.

"Corporate Welfare" or Economic Development? Every year, the federal government spends between $150 and $200 billion on programs that provide subsidies, grants, low-interest loans, and tax breaks to private businesses. These benefits are unique and are only offered to specific companies or industries; they are granted even when profits for these companies are booming. Overall, there are 100 such corporate subsidy programs in the federal budget today.

While some call this relationship between government and business a valuable "public-private partnership" or "economic development," former secretary of labor Robert Reich called it "corporate welfare"—a term that is now widely used by its critics. "Corporate welfare" is usually defined as unnecessary, wasteful, and an unjust use of federal government funds to support private business. Some experts choose to define "corporate welfare" as solely government grants and services, not tax breaks. Taking tax breaks out of the equation, the annual cost of corporate welfare dips to around $75 billion annually.

Many experts believe there is no difference between welfare for low-income Americans and "welfare" given to large corporations. However—unlike the antipoverty program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children—most subsidies, grants, and tax breaks to businesses have not in recent years been curtailed, let alone abolished. Critics say this practice is wasteful to taxpayers and should be eliminated from the federal budget. In addition, they argue that corporate welfare actually undermines free competition because it tends to favor certain companies over their competitors. In effect, many observers believe the federal government is picking "winners and losers" in the business world—a role it should not be playing.

While few experts and lawmakers support all subsidies, grants, and other forms of "corporate welfare," many do argue that the federal government should assist private industry. They contend that government has a basic interest in promoting research and development, and other corporate projects. These programs can enrich the public good and not just the wallets of chief executive officers (CEOs). For example, many government subsidies aim to improve environmental protection efforts and develop new technologies that enable industries to use renewable resources. In addition, a mutually beneficial partnership between government and business—common in many other countries—sharpens the United States' competitive edge in global markets. According to some experts, without many tax breaks and research grants, American companies would not be as strong as they are today.

OUTLOOK

Projections that the U.S. government will be generating budget surpluses well into the twenty-first century have put the president and Congress in the enviable position of no longer having to discuss spending cuts and tax hikes. Instead, they are debating how best to use this extra money. Should spending increase and for what programs? Should the government cut taxes, and if so, by how much? Or should Congress pay down the national debt first? Although most lawmakers and experts welcome the good news concerning America's recent fiscal health, many warn that challenges lie ahead, including the predicted insolvency of Social Security thirty years into the next century. In the short term, many analysts say that the federal government should proceed with caution as it addresses these and other budgetary issues and be aware that an unexpected downturn in the U.S. economy could sink the government back into a sea of red ink.

THE DEBATE: THE FEDERAL BUDGET

The budget surplus should be used to reduce the national debt.

PRO: Although the U.S. government has balanced the budget, the national debt still looms. If it is not eliminated or at least significantly reduced soon, future generations of Americans will be burdened by high interest rates and heavy taxes. Only after the debt is paid off should Congress and the president begin handing out spending increases and tax cuts. Those policies were the reason the budget sank into deficit in the first place.

CON: During the 1990s, the deficit forced Congress to raise taxes and cut spending. Now with the first surplus in thirty years, it is time to give something back to the people. The government can invest more in education, strengthen the nation's infrastructure, give working families a long overdue tax relief, and improve access to health care. These are not wasteful proposals. They are investments in the country's future.

Social Security should be privatized.

PRO: The government has done a poor job managing the Social Security system and will be unable to cope with the growing number of retirees in the early twenty-first century. There is no guarantee that the money being taken out of workers' paychecks will be there for them. Americans should be able to invest that money in stocks and bonds and profit from the stock market, which will provide a much greater return than Social Security ever will.

CON: Playing the market is an uncertain venture, which is why many Americans choose not to invest their money in stocks. Exposing the nation's retirement funds to the fluctuations of the stock market, without a guaranteed safety net from the government, would be careless. Many Americans have no idea how the market works and would be unlikely to make informed investment choices. The risk of transferring Social Security funds to private accounts would be immense.

"Corporate welfare" should be eliminated.

PRO: The federal government wastes more than $150 billion every year handing out subsidies, loans, and tax breaks to huge corporations. It is unfair that programs designed to help underprivileged families have been scaled back while "corporate welfare" has not been touched. These handouts to big business cost the taxpayers billions of dollars and are not even very good for the economy. They favor certain companies over others.

CON: While some government subsidies to businesses are indeed wasteful, many "corporate welfare" programs do serve the public interest. Federal funds allow companies to pay for new research and development so they can better compete overseas. These programs create jobs and keep the economy and the country strong. Without this partnership with the government, many U.S. industries would be less competitive in the global market.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights. Added to the Constitution in 1791 at the demand of many Americans, these amendments were designed to protect individual freedoms and limit the power of the federal government. Included in the Bill of Rights are promises that give Americans the freedom to express themselves, that protect persons accused of crimes, and that limit the power of the national government. Although the Bill of Rights is the major source of rights, other sections of the Constitution also grant rights.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should abortion remain legal?
- Should the federal government regulate the Internet to protect users' privacy?
- Should doctor-assisted suicide be allowed?

Many current controversial issues, such as the death penalty and abortion, stem from conflicts over how the Bill of Rights should be interpreted. Much of the wording in the Constitution and its amendments is general; therefore, many Americans disagree on how this language applies to certain situations.

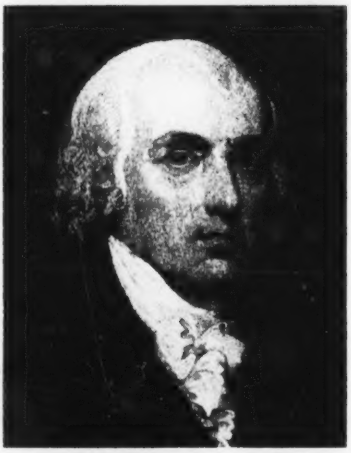
Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Supreme Court of the United States to determine the meaning of the Constitution. Some people believe that the Court should interpret the Constitution strictly by upholding the literal meanings of its authors. Others think that the job of the Supreme Court is to apply the spirit of the ideas expressed in the Constitution to modern-day situations. Sometimes the Court must decide cases in which both sides claim to be exercising their constitutional rights.

BACKGROUND

Guaranteeing Individual Rights

The Constitution of the United States, written in 1787, needed to be ratified by nine of the existing thirteen states to become law. Many states approved the document only under the provision that Congress would soon add amendments listing individual rights. James Madison, a member of Congress from Virginia, wrote the proposals from which these amendments eventually emerged. In December 1791, ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, were ratified by the states and became part of the Constitution.

Although they are more than 200 years old, many of the ideas expressed in the Constitution and in the Bill of Rights are still relevant. In particular, the following issues have been the center of many famous cases argued before the U.S. Supreme Court and continue to provoke public debate today.



Library of Congress

James Madison sponsored the first ten amendments to the Constitution. These amendments, which became known as the Bill of Rights, outlined many of the individual freedoms guaranteed to Americans.

Freedom of Religion. Part of the First Amendment reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The courts have interpreted this to mean that government and religion should be separate. However, many Americans disagree on how to maintain this separation without interfering with a person's right to practice religion.

Some Americans are separationists and believe that to protect religious liberty, the line between religion and government should not be crossed. Others are accommodationists and believe that government should make allowances for the long religious tradition in U.S. society.

The Supreme Court has heard many cases involving the freedom of religion, ruling on both sides of this issue. For example, in a 1989 case, the Court ruled that a local government could display a Christmas tree and a Hanukkah menorah as part of a salute to liberty because they were not endorsing either religion but rather representing cultural diversity. Opening state and federal legislative sessions with a prayer has also been upheld. However, the Court has outlawed some religious practices in public schools, such as official prayers at the beginning of the school day or at graduation ceremonies.

In recent years, some Americans have criticized Supreme Court rulings that they believe have failed to protect religious practices that conflict with general laws. Consequently in 1993 Congress passed, and President Bill Clinton signed, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), a law that was designed to limit legislation at all levels of government that might place an unfair burden on the free exercise of religion. In 1997, the Supreme Court struck down RFRA. However, Congress and many states are currently considering new versions of the bill.

RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

The separation of church and state is one of the fundamental organizing principles of American democracy. Years of Supreme Court decisions and federal laws have upheld that separation, including the outlawing of compulsory, school-sponsored prayer in 1962. Since that controversial Supreme Court decision, local school districts, civil liberties advocates, and the courts have argued over such issues as the use of school facilities for religious meetings, the teaching of evolution, and the rights of schools to display religious symbols.

Freedom of Expression. The First Amendment also forbids Congress from making laws that prevent Americans from speaking or writing what they wish. The courts have ruled that these rights of free expression are not unlimited. For example, the First Amendment does not allow speech or writing that makes false statements about a private person's character, specifically plans the violent overthrow of the government, or incites riot. However, the amendment does allow citizens to hold peaceful meetings and public protests asking the government to correct a perceived wrong.

The Supreme Court is sometimes asked to decide whether unpopular speech should be protected in the same manner as popular speech. For example, in *Texas v. Johnson* (1989), the justices ruled that burning the American flag was protected by the First Amendment. The Court later overturned a St. Paul, Minnesota, city ordinance that outlawed the display of racist symbols such as a Nazi swastika. People who support rulings like these say that even offensive speech should be protected to ensure that the government cannot censor unpopular views. Some Americans disagree with these rulings, saying that it should be constitutional to outlaw certain types of inflammatory or hurtful speech. On several occasions, Congress has taken up debate on adding an amendment to the Constitution that would ban flag burning.

Free Speech on the Internet. The dramatic growth of the Internet, a system that connects more than 10 million computers worldwide, has provoked new debates about the right to free speech. Because it enables nearly instantaneous access to information and reference material, the Internet has been heralded for its educational and communications potential. However, the system has also been used to distribute pornographic materials on-line, much of which can be accessed by underage computer users.

In 1996, President Clinton signed the Communications Decency Act (CDA), outlawing the transmission of sexually explicit materials to minors via the Internet. The following year, the Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional. While most justices agreed in principle with protecting children from harmful material, they stated that the CDA was unnecessarily broad and could suppress the free speech rights of adults.

The Right to Bear Arms. The Second Amendment protects "the right of the people to keep and bear arms." After the American Revolution, the first Congress wanted to ensure that people could form armed militias, such as the National Guard, if needed. The wording of this amendment has caused much debate about whether it gives individuals the right to own any gun for any reason. Currently, federal laws prohibit private ownership of certain types of firearms. Still, Americans own more than 200 million rifles, shotguns, and handguns. Individuals who collect guns or use them for sport often cite this "right to bear arms" when criticizing gun laws. Lawmakers who support restrictions on gun ownership say gun control laws are needed to stop gun violence in the United States and that the right to bear arms refers to state militias, not private individuals.

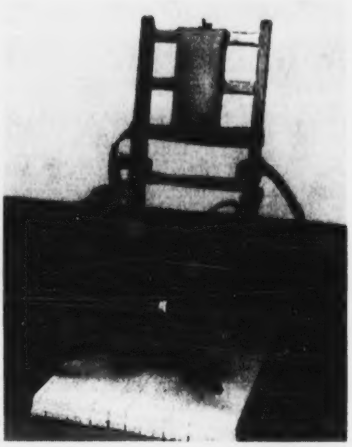
Protecting Suspected Criminals. The Bill of Rights states that the government should treat fairly any persons accused of crimes. The following amendments address the rights of suspected criminals.

- The Fourth Amendment protects persons from "unreasonable searches and seizures."
- The Fifth Amendment protects suspects from being forced to testify against themselves; protects defendants from double jeopardy (being retried for crimes for which they were previously found not guilty); and prevents the government from taking a person's life, property, or freedom except in ways specified by law.
- The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to a "speedy and public trial" by jury, the right to an attorney, and the rights to confront adverse witnesses and obtain favorable ones.

REVISITING MIRANDA

The Miranda warnings, which begin "You have the right to remain silent . . . ," are familiar to every American who has watched a police show on television in the past thirty years. These rights stem from a 1966 United States Supreme Court decision, *Miranda v. Arizona*, which stated a suspect's constitutional right to be warned that voluntary confessions can be used against him or her in court. The ruling was intended to protect the accused from the inherently coercive atmosphere of a police interrogation. But, in February 1999, a federal appeals court in Virginia invoked an obscure 1968 federal law that had essentially reversed *Miranda* and allowed into court a voluntary confession by a bank robber who had not been read his rights. Experts predict that the Supreme Court will eventually hear the case and determine the fate of the *Miranda* ruling.

- The Eighth Amendment forbids "excessive bail" and "cruel and unusual punishment."


Virginia Department of Corrections, David Botkins, Public Affairs

Supporters of the death penalty argue that it is just punishment in certain murder cases and helps deter crime. Opponents believe that the death penalty is "cruel and unusual punishment" and therefore violates the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. Today, there is increasing support for banning the electric chair—now used in only six states—as a means of execution, in favor of lethal injection.

Unenumerated Rights. The Ninth Amendment prevents the government from denying rights not specifically mentioned in the Constitution. Acknowledging that no listing of rights can be truly complete, this amendment states that rights not listed are "retained by the people." For example, the Supreme Court has recognized the right to privacy, the right to vote, and the right to travel, even though they are not specifically mentioned in the Constitution. However, the Court has most often based such unenumerated rights on the Fourteenth Amendment, rather than the Ninth Amendment.

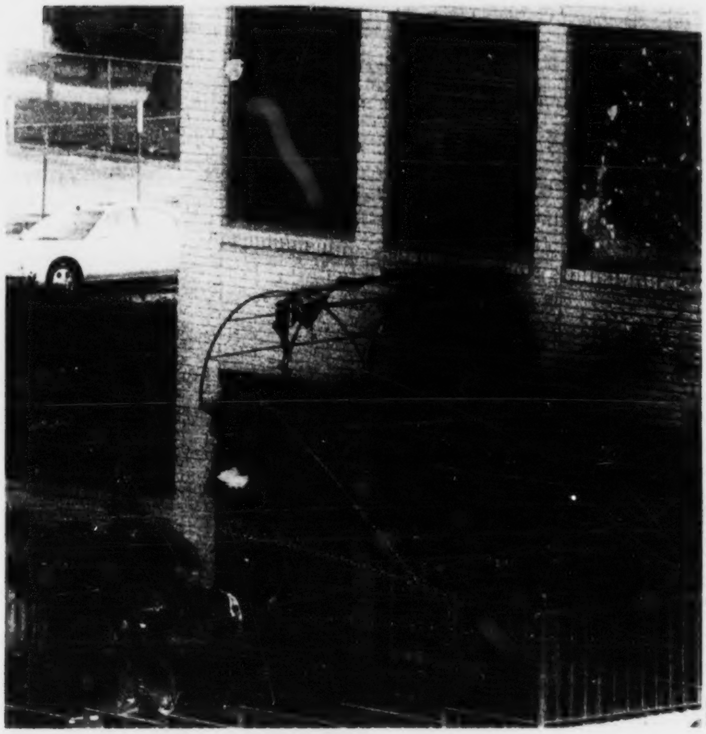
Federalism. In a federalist system like that of the United States, power is shared by both the national and state governments. The Tenth Amendment says that powers not given to the federal government, nor prohibited to the states by the Constitution, are reserved for the states or the people. This amendment is often cited when making cases for stronger states' rights and decreasing the power of the federal government. A recent example is the Handgun Control Act (also known as the Brady law).

The Handgun Control Act. Enacted in 1994, the Handgun Control Act required states to impose a five-day waiting period before a customer could take a handgun away from the store. During this waiting period, state police would conduct background checks on buyers to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. If the buyer's background included a felony conviction, for example, he or she would be prohibited from purchasing a handgun.

In December 1996, however, local law enforcement officials from Montana and Arizona challenged the law before the Supreme Court, arguing that the federal government was overstepping its bounds by requiring them to perform and pay for the background check system. In 1997, the Court ruled in favor of the states and struck down this requirement but left other provisions of the law intact.

The Fourteenth Amendment. Although the Fourteenth Amendment is not part of the Bill of Rights, it is often used to protect the rights of individuals. Originally, the Bill of Rights only applied to actions of the federal government, but the Fourteenth Amendment, which was added to the Constitution after the Civil War, extended most Bill of Rights protections to the actions of state and local governments as well.

Another part of the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits racial and sexual discrimination. The amendment has also been interpreted by the Supreme Court to protect a person's right to refuse medical treatment and a woman's right to have an abortion.



The January 1998 bombing of an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, (shown here) killed a guard and seriously injured a nurse. In October of the same year, Dr. Barnett Slepian, an abortion provider in upstate New York, was gunned down while standing in the kitchen of his home.

AP Photo/Birmingham Post Herald, Larry Kasperek

CURRENT ISSUES

Abortion. Abortion has been and still is one of the nation's most controversial issues. In its 1973 landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court ruled that a woman has a constitutional right to an abortion. The Court based its ruling on two findings. First, the justices found that a woman's right to privacy allows her to end a pregnancy. Although the word "privacy" does not appear in the Constitution, the Supreme Court had ruled in earlier cases that a right to privacy does exist. Second, the Court said that a fetus is not a person and thus is not protected under the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee that "no person" can be deprived of life without a fair trial. In effect, the *Roe v. Wade* decision struck down state laws forbidding abortion during the first three months—or first trimester—of pregnancy. The decision did allow states to regulate abortion during the second trimester and prohibit abortion during the last three months, when the fetus could be capable of living outside the womb.

The Court's decision gave rise to an antiabortion movement that called for states to find ways to restrict abortion and for the Supreme Court to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. In a 1989 case, the Supreme Court gave states greater power to restrict abortions, causing both proponents and critics of legalized abortion to focus their efforts on state legislatures. In 1992, the Supreme Court created new criteria for determining the legality of abortion, but stopped short of overturning the *Roe* ruling. The Court ruled that, as long as they do not place an "undue burden" on a woman's right to an abortion, the states can regulate access to the procedure as they choose. The new concept of "undue burden" gave more power to the states to limit access to abortions.

Opponents of legalized abortion believe that human life begins at conception and that aborting a pregnancy is murder. They say that *Roe v. Wade* gives women the legal right to commit this crime.

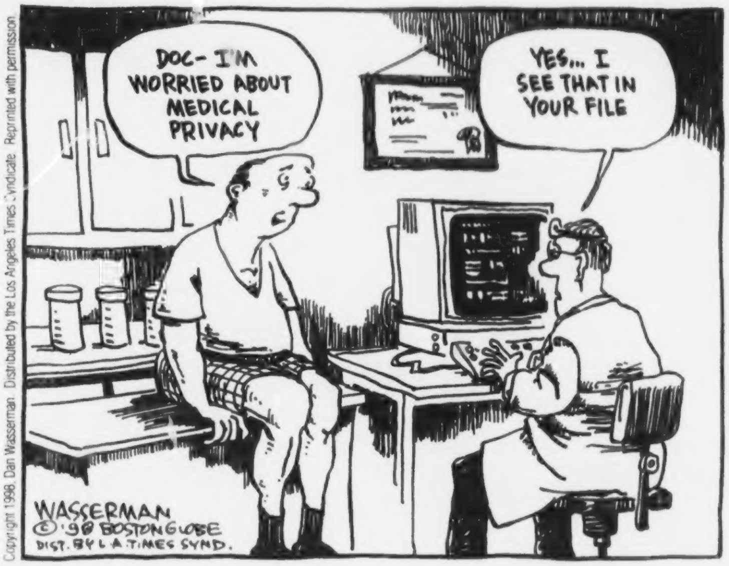
Foes of abortion also contend that it has led to sexual promiscuity in American society—especially among teenagers, some of whom may view abortion as an acceptable means of birth control. Some opponents of legalized abortion also say that the procedure is harmful to women's health. They cite studies that show high rates of hemorrhage, infection, and complications in subsequent pregnancies for women who have had abortions.

Those who believe that abortion should remain legal say that in a free society the government should not take away a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy. They argue that abortion is a personal choice and that a woman should have control over her own body. In addition, abortion rights activists argue that medical experts do not agree on when human life begins; therefore, abortion cannot be considered murder. They dispute the idea that large numbers of women view abortion as a means of birth control and instead describe it as a last resort for women in desperate situations. They also contend that legalized abortion protects women by allowing them to have qualified physicians perform the procedure—preventing them from using dangerous, often life-threatening methods to terminate unwanted pregnancies.

Privacy in an Electronic Age. When the Department of Defense developed the Internet in the 1970s as an alternative wartime communication method, they could not have predicted the enormous global impact it would have. Today, millions of people throughout the world "surf the Net" regularly for work, shopping, and entertainment. Hundreds of thousands of World Wide Web sites provide vast quantities of information, and Internet capabilities enable "Netizens" to send electronic mail messages around the globe in an instant, trade stocks on Wall Street from their own personal computers, and order numerous products and services from on-line businesses. However, the Internet has not come without warnings of its attendant problems.

One issue at stake is the privacy of medical patients. Nationally, many Americans have been calling for better privacy protection for medical and pharmaceutical records. Though some health care officials—and some patients—believe the Internet can benefit medical care by providing researchers and doctors access to important medical history information, many others fear that such access to medical records will be harmful.

The growing industry of electronic business—"e-commerce"—has raised major questions about how much personal information companies can obtain from Internet users who visit commercial Web sites. Business has long relied on personal information about consumers to help plan marketing strategies and target the customers who are most likely to purchase their goods and services. The Internet has provided another way to gather such information. Many Web sites request—and in some cases require—that visitors provide personal information like their name, telephone number, and home and e-mail addresses. Often, this information is used to sell Web site advertising or sold to other companies for marketing purposes.


DOC- I'M WORRIED ABOUT MEDICAL PRIVACY
YES... I SEE THAT IN YOUR FILE
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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Currently, the acquisition and use of information gleaned from the Internet is not regulated. Some Web sites offer information disclosure policies, which tell visitors what information is being collected and how it will be used. A 1998 Federal Trade Commission (FTC) study found that only 14 percent of Web sites that collect personal information post a disclosure policy. A 1999 study showed that number had increased to 65 percent. Still, many Americans worry that the privacy standards they have come to expect will be lost in the electronic world.

The Constitution does not protect citizens' privacy from the actions of other private individuals or businesses. However, Congress can pass laws that regulate the actions of individuals and businesses. Thus, some citizens think that the federal government needs to create an Electronic Privacy Bill of Rights. They believe that Internet consumers should have the right to choose whether personal information is collected from them and to know how it will be disseminated. Such proponents also support the creation of a federal agency or office to oversee and enforce these protections. They argue that the on-line industry is incapable of monitoring itself and requires federal oversight to protect people's rights.

Those who oppose federal regulations insist that the Internet industry can and will regulate itself with regard to consumer privacy. These critics say that it is good business to protect customers' privacy because then they will return to make additional purchases. Some experts also argue that, with the Internet changing so rapidly, it would be premature to create uniform standards now. They cite privacy protection measures already in place, such as encryption software that scrambles electronically transmitted data like credit card numbers. Finally, these Internet advocates argue that federal privacy standards amount to government "policing" of the Internet.

Assisted Suicide. In recent years, debates over the right of terminally and chronically ill patients to end their lives have erupted in many states. In the case of *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health* (1990), the Supreme Court determined that the right to refuse medical treatment was guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. As long as there was "clear and convincing evidence" of a patient's wishes, life support systems could be turned off at the family's request. Recently, however, some terminally ill patients have sought doctors' assistance to end their lives before becoming severely incapacitated. Polls show that most Americans favor legalizing doctor-assisted suicide, though the number has dropped in recent years.

In 1997, the Supreme Court heard two cases in which terminally ill patients challenged Washington and New York state laws prohibiting physician-assisted suicide. In both cases, the Court ruled 9 to 0 to uphold the state laws, finding that there is "no generalized right to commit suicide." However, the decisions suggested that states were free to experiment with doctor-assisted suicide if they chose to do so. Currently, Oregon is the only state that allows the practice. In 1998, the first full year Oregon's law was in effect, fifteen people elected to end their lives with a legal drug overdose.

Proponents of assisted suicide say that it allows terminally ill patients to die with dignity, without

AP Photo/Carlos Osorio

In March 1999, Dr. Jack Kevorkian (left) was convicted of second-degree murder for administering a lethal injection to a terminally ill man, Thomas Youk, who wished to die. Kevorkian, an outspoken advocate of the right-to-die movement, videotaped himself injecting the patient. That videotape was later broadcast on national television.

prolonged pain and suffering. Right-to-die supporters argue that patients are being kept alive long after their quality of life has irreversibly deteriorated. They say that permitting doctors to assist in patients' suicides and establishing guidelines to regulate their efforts enables patients and their families to make informed decisions about what is best for them.

Opponents argue that doctor-assisted suicides allow too many opportunities for misuse of the procedure. For instance, they say, older patients and patients with little money might be pressured to choose to die once they become a financial burden on their families. Some people oppose the right to die because they believe that humans should not "play God" and try to decide when it is acceptable for someone to end his or her life. Some doctors reject the idea because they say it is against their medical code of ethics to actively cause a patient's death.

OUTLOOK

Most citizens view the United States as the freest society in the world because its people have so many rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The Supreme Court, through its rulings, defines and clarifies the meanings of these documents. Court rulings also determine how Americans can exercise their rights, whether or by how much the government can regulate or limit those rights, and when the rights of one individual or group should be limited because they are infringing upon the rights of someone else. Americans also have the right to amend the Constitution if they disagree with a decision of the Supreme Court or if they think additional rights need to be extended to the people. This interplay between Supreme Court rulings and the will of the American people shapes the interpretation of the Constitution and its role in American democracy.

THE DEBATE: CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Abortion should remain legal.

PRO: A woman should have the right to terminate her pregnancy and to do so without government interference. Because no one has proved that life begins at conception, abortion cannot be considered murder. Most women view abortion as a last resort, not as birth control. Legalized abortion protects women's health by allowing competent doctors to perform the procedure safely.

CON: Because human life begins at conception, abortion is murder. Too many men and women view abortion as a means of birth control, an attitude that has led to sexual promiscuity. Abortions can also cause health problems and may complicate future pregnancies. The government must protect the rights of unborn children who cannot protect themselves.

The government should regulate the Internet to protect users' privacy.

PRO: Internet users and consumers need to know whether personal information is collected from them and how it will be used. The on-line industry has shown that it will sacrifice privacy for profit. Thus, there is great potential for harming people should personal information fall into the wrong hands. To protect Americans' privacy, the government should enact an Electronic Privacy Bill of Rights and provide an agency to oversee its enforcement.

CON: The Internet industry can and will regulate itself to protect user privacy. Doing so is good business because it will keep customers coming back. The Internet is changing so rapidly that any safeguards enacted now will soon be obsolete. Many privacy protections are already in place and reports of fraud are low. Government privacy standards for the Internet amount to federal "policing" of a democratic medium that should be free from regulation.

Doctor-assisted suicide should be allowed.

PRO: The right to die is both a human and a constitutional right. Today's medical technology can keep people alive in a vegetative or severely impaired state for indefinite periods of time. Doctor-assisted suicide spares terminally and chronically ill patients prolonged pain and suffering. Patients should be able to die with dignity, and they should be able to do so with the legal assistance of a certified doctor.

CON: It is unethical for doctors, or anyone else, to end the life of another human being under any circumstances. Assisted suicide could lead to killing older, sick, or disabled people. Uninsured patients will be pressured to choose death to avoid being a financial burden. In addition, patients are sometimes misdiagnosed with terminal illnesses, which could cause their families to make decisions they later regret.

CRIME AND DRUGS

Crime touches the lives of millions of Americans, regardless of age, race, gender, or income. Whether they have been victims or not, many Americans say that the fear of crime lessens their sense of security. However, studies show that crime, although pervasive, affects certain sectors of the population more adversely than others.

In the early 1990s, "crimes against the person"—murders, assaults, and robberies—increased in the United States. Over the past few years, however, the violent crime rate has dropped. In October 1997, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported that the murder rate reached its lowest level since 1967. Law enforcement officials credit this decline to a number of factors: better neighborhood policing, stricter jail sentences, and tighter gun control laws. However, despite these encouraging statistics, about 1.7 million violent crimes are still committed every year in the United States.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Do gun control laws reduce violent crime?
- Should drug convictions carry mandatory jail sentences?
- Should juveniles ever be tried as adults?

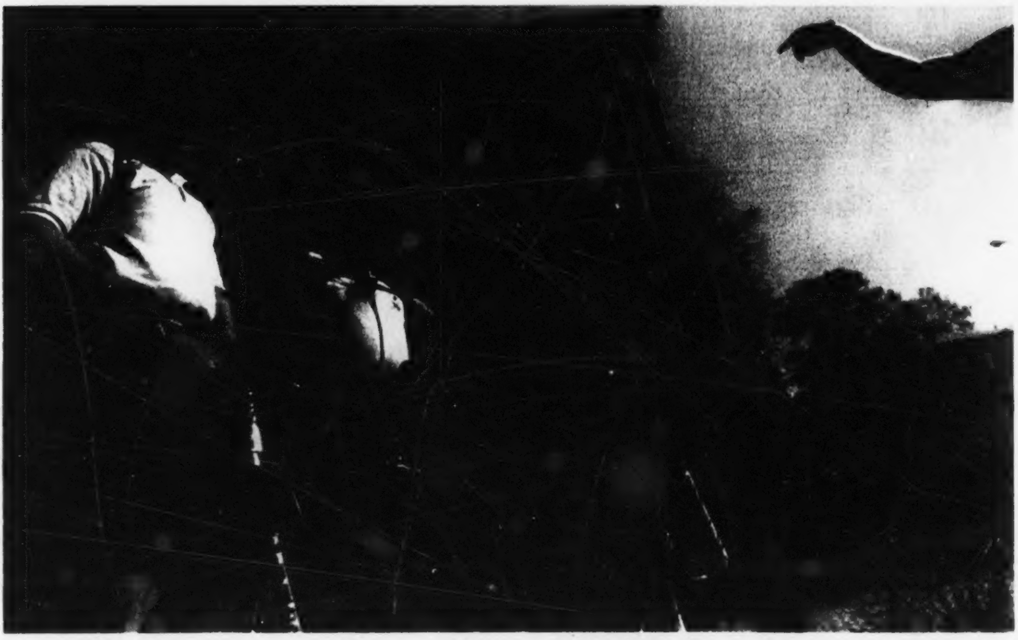
Fighting crime is an enormous task because many economic and social issues contribute to lawlessness, including poverty, splintered families, drugs, unemployment, and the availability of firearms. Consequently, policymakers disagree on where to focus their anticrime policies: stricter law enforcement or programs aimed at crime prevention. Many Americans believe that harsher punishment and stronger law enforcement will reduce crime; others say that it is most important to attack the underlying social problems that commonly lead to crime.

BACKGROUND

Crime in the United States

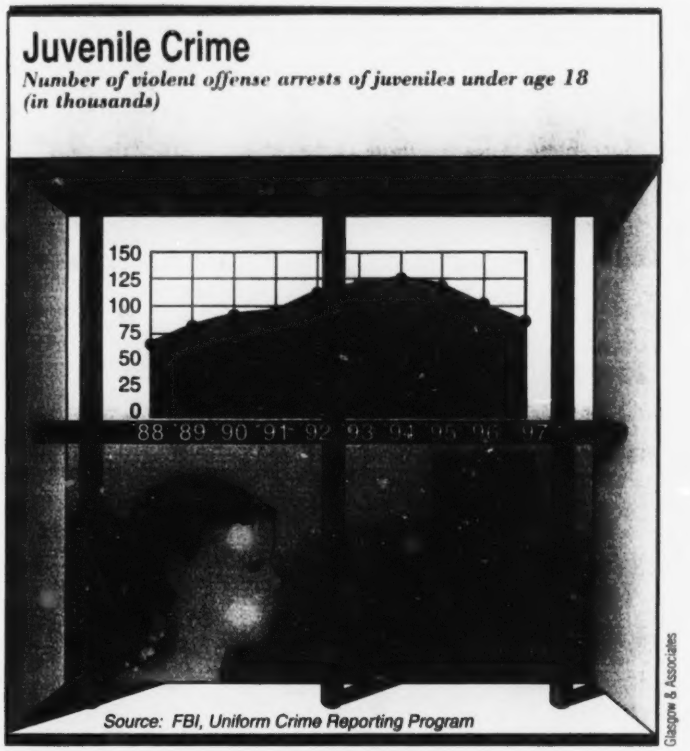
Violence in America. More than 13 million crimes are committed annually in the United States. Almost 90 percent of these are crimes against property, such as burglary or car theft; the rest are violent crimes.

Violent crimes—murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—continue to be a top concern of many citizens. However, government statistics indicate that crime rates are dropping, often dramatically, across the country. In 1997, the homicide rate reached a thirty-year low. In the first six months of 1998, the number of violent crimes dropped 7 percent below the previous year; murders fell by 8 percent. Law enforcement officials and sociologists attribute this decline to a combination of factors, including the aging of large sections of the population, tougher sentencing laws, more effective community policing, gun control laws, crime prevention efforts, and low unemployment. In



AP Photo/The Virginian-Pilot, Tiing-Li Wang

Many police departments across the country have established bicycle patrols as part of community policing efforts. Here, several officers receive training in how bike patrols can help fight crime.



Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reporting Program

Glasgow & Associates

Despite the recent drop in the violent crime rate, many Americans are alarmed at the high number of crimes committed by juveniles.

some places, such as New York City, a "broken windows" policy—which attempts to prosecute even small crimes like breaking windows and spraypainting graffiti in the hopes of deterring larger ones—has proved successful in keeping communities safer.

Juvenile Crime. Although the overall violent crime rate has declined, violent crimes committed by juveniles, particularly homicide, rose throughout the early 1990s. Experts attributed the rise to a breakdown of families and communities, as well as the influence of gangs, access to weapons, and the use of drugs. But, in 1995, those numbers began dropping and continued to do so throughout the decade. Still, public fears about juvenile crime remain high, fueled by a series of well-publicized schoolhouse shootings in the late 1990s. In April 1999, two alienated teenagers opened fire on their classmates at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, killing fifteen people, including themselves.

What Causes Crime? Some experts say the roots of crime are poverty, drug abuse, and lack of employment and education opportunities. Others contend that the judicial system is failing to rehabilitate violent criminals or keep them off the streets.

Poverty. Approximately 13 percent of the population lives below the poverty line in the United

States. Experts say that low-income workers and the unemployed are more likely to be depressed and frustrated and therefore more inclined to commit unlawful acts. This appears to be especially true in low-income urban areas, where homicide is the leading cause of death among African-American males between the ages of 25 and 45.

Millions of Guns. Law enforcement officials cite the availability of guns and the willingness of people to use them as major factors in the high crime rate. Americans own more than 200 million firearms, including handguns, rifles, and shotguns. Although legal purchases are regulated, people can buy guns illegally with relative ease.

In 1996, there were about 9,000 handgun-related homicides in the United States, down from 11,000 in 1995. Some attribute this decline in part to the passage in 1993 of the Handgun Control Act (also known as the Brady law), which mandates a five-day waiting period for anyone buying a handgun. In 1994, Congress also approved a ban on the manufacture, sale, or possession of nineteen types of semiautomatic assault weapons.

The Role of Drugs. Most experts say that the sale and use of illegal drugs, particularly heroin and cocaine, contribute greatly to violent crime. Many illegal drugs are addictive, and users often commit crimes to support their drug habits. In addition, drug trafficking—the business of manufacturing and selling drugs—is lucrative. Shootings and murders are commonplace in the drug trade, as drug dealers compete for territory and money.

Fighting Drugs. According to a 1997 survey by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, drug use among young people is increasing. The survey found that almost 11 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds admitted to using illegal drugs in the month preceding the

REDUCING DRUG ABUSE

In July 1998, the federal government launched a $195 million media campaign aimed at reducing drug use among the nation's youth. Advertisements on radio and television are targeted primarily toward middle schoolers, ages 11 to 13, because this is often the time young people form their opinions about illegal drug use. Other advertisements focus on encouraging parents to talk to their children about drug abuse, following studies that show that parents often underestimate their children's exposure to and experience with illegal drugs.

survey, double the percentage reported in 1992. Of the total population aged 12 and over, 6.4 percent reported using illegal drugs in the prior year.

Some people say illegal drugs are flooding into the country because of sophisticated production and trafficking methods used in foreign nations—the "supply side" theory. Others counter that drugs find their way into the United States because of the huge market for narcotics—the "demand" theory. These different theories are important because each requires a different solution. The supply-siders advocate fighting the drug war abroad, at U.S. borders, and with the street dealers. Those who believe in the demand theory advocate spending money on prevention and education programs at home. Others think that any successful antidrug effort must be a combination of both approaches.

Currently, the federal government allocates about 70 percent of its antidrug budget to curbing the supply of illegal substances. This effort seeks to destroy crops used to make drugs in foreign countries, encourages those nations to plant other crops, and tries to intercept shipments of narcotics before they enter the United States. The remaining 30 percent of the federal antidrug budget is spent on education and treatment programs to reduce the demand for drugs.

Fighting Crime. In 1994, Congress passed, and President Bill Clinton signed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which provided $30 billion over six years for crime control. Major provisions of the new law included funding to add 100,000 police officers nationwide; a ten-year ban on certain semiautomatic assault weapons; an expansion of the death penalty to cover additional federal crimes; and approval to impose a mandatory life sentence on any criminal convicted of three felonies for violent crimes (a provision known as "three strikes, you're out").

Megan's Law. Victims' rights advocates around the country have lobbied hard for legislation meant to protect potential victims. Most notable are a series of protective laws named after young victims. One such example is New Jersey's Megan's Law, memorializing 7-year-old Megan Kanka, who was brutally murdered in 1994 by a known sex offender living in her neighborhood. Megan's Law has served as the model for a federal law and numerous state laws that require various types of public notification when convicted sex offenders and child molesters are released into the community.

Many civil liberties advocates challenge these notification laws, arguing they violate privacy rights. Supporters cite the high recidivism rate for child molesters and maintain that parents and community members have a right to protect their children from potential harm.

CURRENT ISSUES

Gun Control. According to a recent U.S. Justice Department survey, Americans own more than 200 million handguns, rifles, and shotguns. The survey also found that 35 percent of all U.S. households and 25 percent of all adults own guns. The widespread availability of firearms and the high number of gun-related deaths have prompted some individuals and groups to organize efforts to control the buying and selling of firearms. However, others argue that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees citizens the right to buy and own guns without government control.

Pointing out that the majority of homicides are committed with firearms, gun control advocates assert that violent crime cannot be curbed unless handgun ownership is further regulated or banned. Proponents of gun control want the government to at least require owners to register their handguns and to perform background checks on all potential handgun

WHO'S TO BLAME?

In 1998 and 1999, several major U.S. cities began a new campaign to lessen gun violence in their communities by suing gun manufacturers, distributors, and dealers. City officials complain that these companies knowingly turn a blind eye on the illegal gun market and that manufacturers should be responsible for adding safety mechanisms that would prevent unauthorized persons from using guns. Their attorneys argued that manufacturers should be held liable for contributing to the "public nuisance"—including police and hospital costs—of gun violence. Gun industry advocates say that they are abiding by the law and have begun trying to limit the type of lawsuits that can be brought by city officials.

In an effort to get illegal weapons off the streets, some cities hold toys-for-guns exchange programs. Here, a New York City police officer shows some of the hundreds of guns that were exchanged for toy gift certificates during one such program.

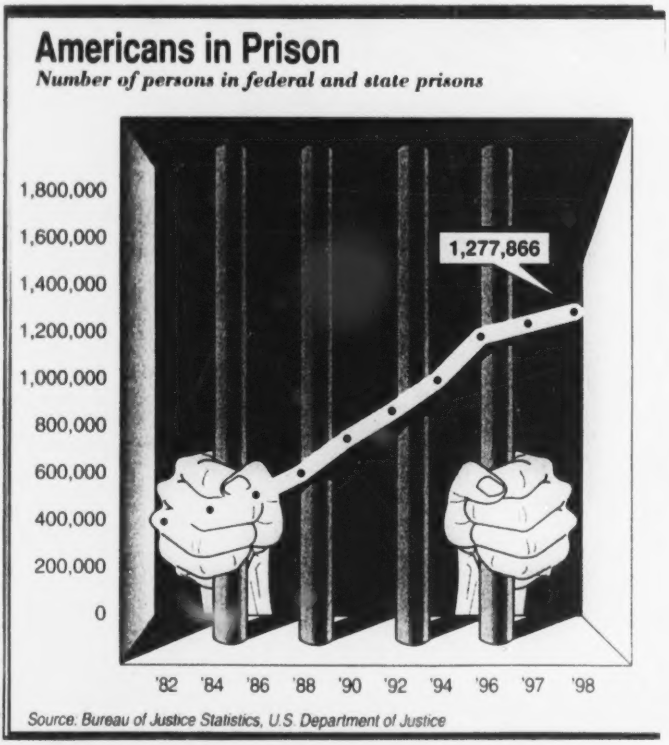
REUTERS/Peter Morgan/Archive Photos

buyers to ensure that they do not have criminal records. Some want to limit the number of guns an individual can buy within a certain time period; others want to ban the sale of handguns completely. Gun control proponents also believe that the Second Amendment does not rule out tighter gun regulation because the amendment protects the right of a militia (the National Guard), not private citizens, to have guns.

Opponents of gun control, led by the National Rifle Association (NRA), argue that the Second Amendment guarantees all citizens, not just those in the militia, the right to "keep and bear arms." Although the NRA supports instant computer checks of gun buyers as an alternative to waiting periods, gun control opponents fear that requiring licenses to own certain kinds of firearms may be the first step toward government confiscation of all guns. They argue that restricting gun ownership will not keep criminals from obtaining guns and will not prevent crime because most criminals do not purchase guns legally, but instead steal them or buy them from illegal dealers. Opponents also warn that, ultimately, gun control could disarm the law-abiding general public and place them at the mercy of well-armed criminals.

Mandatory Sentencing. About 2 million men and women are locked up in the nation's jails and prisons—a record high. One of the reasons for the large U.S. prison population is that judges often have no choice but to impose mandatory prison sentences for first-time criminals, particularly drug offenders. Mandatory sentencing laws obligate judges to send certain offenders to prison. These laws became popular during the 1980s as a way to combat the increase in crime produced by the illegal drug trade, particularly the buying and selling of crack cocaine.

Many law enforcement officials think that mandatory sentencing laws send a strong message to would-be drug dealers that they face time in jail if caught and convicted. Experts also argue that the judicial system has to act forcefully to keep people safe from drugs and the violence that often stems from their sale and use. In addition, proponents of mandatory sentencing laws believe that U.S. taxpayers are willing to spend their tax money to get drug offenders off the streets



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice

The United States has a higher percentage of people in prison than any other country in the world.

GENETIC EVIDENCE

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and state laboratories are working together to further the use of DNA evidence in solving crimes. By developing a national system of quicker and cheaper DNA testing and matching, law enforcement officials hope to expand rapidly the number of cases solved—and criminals sent to jail—because of DNA evidence.

Civil liberties advocates argue that deciding who is tested and how their genetic material is handled is crucial. Lawsuits have already been brought by groups of prisoners who objected to being tested to see whether their DNA matched that of evidence found at the scenes of other crimes. But proponents of DNA testing say the science can work to the advantage of prisoners, too. More than fifty convicts have been exonerated because of DNA samples.

AP Photo/Steve Miller

by locking up criminals and building prisons. Finally, many point out that mandatory sentencing helps make the justice system fair, ensuring the same punishment for similar crimes.

However, critics contend that mandatory jail terms for drug felons are too expensive and do little to reduce violent crime. Some experts contend that mandatory sentencing laws, which include first-time nonviolent drug felons, have caused prison overcrowding. They believe that this will inevitably lead to early parole for more violent criminals. Furthermore, most argue that these laws take discretionary control away from judges who otherwise might choose a rehabilitation program for some drug offenders.

Juvenile Crime. The adult criminal system traditionally focuses on punishment. The criminal system for individuals under the age of 18, on the other hand, has generally concentrated more on the prevention of crime and the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents. However, largely because of the fear of rising juvenile crime, almost all fifty states have reformed their juvenile justice laws so that, in some instances, minors can be tried—and imprisoned—as adults.

Supporters of these changes in the juvenile justice system say that violent criminals—no matter what age—deserve harsh punishment. They argue that the juvenile justice system—created more than 100 years ago to deal with petty thieves, truants, and vandals—has become outdated as younger criminals commit increasingly violent crimes. Such proponents believe that the judicial system needs to give younger criminals a strong message about the consequences of their actions. Some maintain that the United States should establish a uniform minimum age at which juveniles can be tried as adults for certain crimes.

AP Photo/Bill Haber

At this New Orleans Teen Court, first-time misdemeanor offenders ages 10–18 who have pleaded guilty in Juvenile Court are sentenced by their peers. Here, the defendant was sentenced to community service and a letter of apology for unauthorized use of a vehicle.

Opponents of these policies argue that placing teens in the adult justice system will turn them into hardened criminals because they are exposed to experienced, often-violent adult offenders. Instead, many people support strong crime prevention and rehabilitation programs such as community centers, boot camps, adult mentors, and help with education and employment. They rationalize that such programs offer less expensive and less traumatic alternatives to overcrowding prisons with teenagers. Furthermore, rehabilitation, rather than just punishment, encourages young people to become productive adults.

OUTLOOK

Many local, state, and federal lawmakers believe the falling crime rate is evidence that present crime fighting methods are working. However, some observers contend that the recent anticrime laws that have emerged from state legislatures and Congress are, at best, short-term solutions. They think the roots of crime—poverty, the breakdown of families, and drug abuse—have yet to be properly addressed by the government and that the increase in drug use among young people is an ominous sign for the future. Therefore, many lawmakers call on law enforcement officials and communities across the country to continue to be vigilant in their anticrime efforts, by strengthening both law enforcement and crime prevention efforts.

THE DEBATE: CRIME AND DRUGS

Gun control laws reduce violent crime.

PRO: Gun-related murders account for more than half of all homicides committed every year in the United States. Stricter regulations for gun owners are needed. Waiting periods and bans on semiautomatic weapons are working: homicide rates are down in most U.S. cities. Other industrialized nations with strict gun control laws, including Great Britain and Japan, never have more than 100 gun-related deaths a year.

CON: Gun control laws do not prevent criminals from obtaining guns. These laws only prevent law-abiding citizens from getting the firearms they need and to which they are constitutionally entitled. Violent criminals obtain guns through illegal means and would continue to commit crimes if stricter laws were passed. Innocent civilians, however, could be left defenseless by such laws.

Drug convictions should carry mandatory jail sentences.

PRO: Mandatory sentencing laws are a strong deterrent to would-be drug dealers. Violent crime in America is decreasing because people now know that if they are caught dealing drugs, they will go to jail. The drug trade brings a great deal of violence to neighborhoods. The key to fighting this violence is keeping dealers off the street. People are willing to spend tax dollars to keep drugs out of their communities by sending more people to jail.

CON: Prisons are overcrowded with first-time drug offenders, many of whom do not have violent criminal records. This is a huge expense and does not help reduce crime. Mandatory drug sentencing laws also result in less room in prisons for violent offenders. Furthermore, sentencing should be up to individual judges, who may think that rehabilitation programs are effective for certain offenders. Investing in these programs is a good way to reduce drug abuse in the long term.

Juveniles should never be tried as adults.

PRO: If juveniles are tried and punished as adults, they may become hardened, lifelong criminals. Instead, more money should be spent on crime prevention and rehabilitation programs, such as education, community centers, and adult mentors. These programs cost less than sending children and teenagers to jail. More importantly, they will rehabilitate troubled young people and help them become productive adults.

CON: Violent criminals, no matter their age, need a strong message and serious consequences. The juvenile justice system is outdated, designed for petty crimes—not the violent ones common today. A minimum age at which juveniles can be tried as adults should be established for violent crimes. Only a harsh punishment will help these troubled youth and keep communities safe.

THE ECONOMY

To the majority of Americans, the economy is the most important domestic policy issue. The state of the economy—the number of jobs created and the cost and availability of consumer goods—plays a significant role in determining not only the strength of the United States but also the mood of the country. Americans feel secure and confident about the future when the economy is performing well.

Since 1992, the United States has enjoyed decreasing unemployment and low inflation. As other countries struggle with weak economies, the U.S. economy has become the envy of the rest of the world. However, statistics suggest that the economic boom is not benefiting all Americans. Some income groups have experienced high unemployment and low wages, while others have prospered. Businesses, individuals, and lawmakers are concerned about how to ensure continued economic growth while improving wages and working conditions for all American workers.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the government raise the minimum wage?
- Should the government abandon the current tax system?
- Should the government reform its antitrust laws?

The debate over what role the federal government should play in the nation's economy continues across the nation and on Capitol Hill. Democrats generally favor a more activist government role in the economy and point to growing economic inequities as evidence that the government needs to intervene in some form. Republicans, on the other hand, believe the government's role should be small and that the market economy, if left alone, can provide more jobs and higher wages. Even during economic booms, the American people pay close attention to these debates because they understand that the resulting policies will probably affect their daily lives.

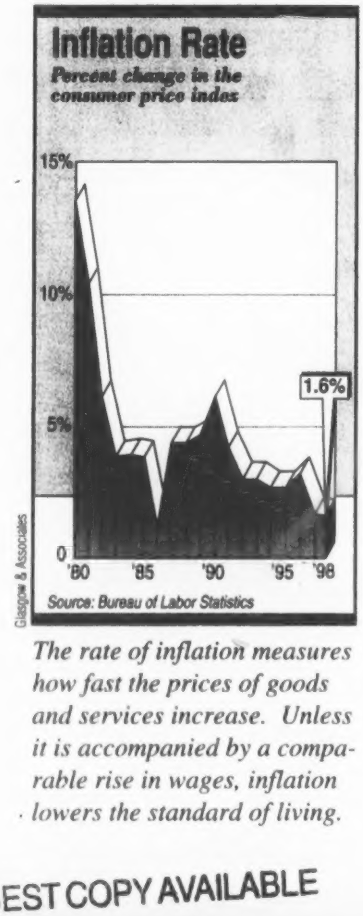
BACKGROUND

Factors in Economic Policy

Inflation. Inflation is the continuing rise in prices for goods and services. The higher the rate of inflation, the faster prices go up. One danger of inflation is that, unless accompanied by a comparable increase in wages, it lowers the standard of living. Inflation particularly hurts people living on fixed incomes, such as retired Americans and those who depend on government-sponsored social programs. A high rate of inflation also induces people to buy on credit and to forgo saving money. The economy suffers when individuals do not save, because banks then have less money to lend for investments.

The government can control inflation in a variety of ways, but the most common method is through the actions of the Federal Reserve Board (the Fed). The Fed determines the amount of money circulating in the economy. The Fed can reduce—or tighten—the money supply by raising interest rates (the price one must pay to borrow money). When interest rates go up, consumer spending decreases and prices level off or go down.

The inflation rate declined from 13.5 percent in 1980 to 1.1 percent in 1986 before rising again to 6.1 percent in 1990. Inflation has been dipping in recent years, falling to a twelve-year low of 1.6 percent in 1998.



The rate of inflation measures how fast the prices of goods and services increase. Unless it is accompanied by a comparable rise in wages, inflation lowers the standard of living.

Unemployment. The rate of unemployment refers to the percentage of men and women who want to work but cannot find jobs. Because there are always people between jobs, the unemployment rate is never zero. Many economists consider the economy to be at full employment when 4 percent or less of the employable population is looking for work. At the end of 1998, the unemployment

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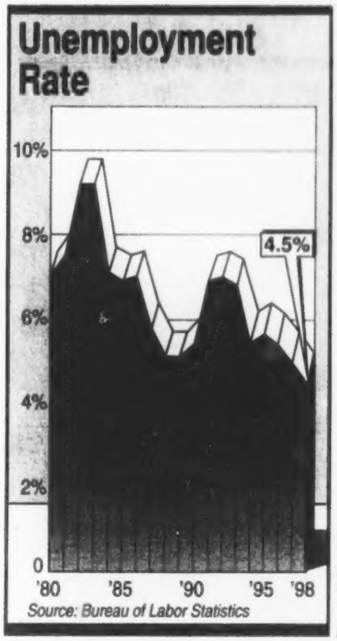
rate was 4.3 percent—the lowest in more than twenty-five years.

Traditionally, unemployment hits some groups harder than others—minorities more than whites, females more than males, teenagers more than adults. Relocating U.S. manufacturing plants can increase unemployment. When American companies move factories to developing countries where workers are paid lower wages, the price of the goods they produce goes down, but U.S. workers lose jobs. However, companies that keep their operations in the United States often must charge comparatively higher prices for their products, causing them to lose sales and forcing them to lay off workers.

Unemployment also affects government and the taxpayers. When men and women are out of work, they pay less in taxes. As a result, the government takes in less revenue. At the same time, the government has to pay out more in unemployment compensation.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Glasgow & Associates

The rate of unemployment measures the percentage of the civilian labor force that wants to work but cannot find jobs. The average unemployment rate for 1998 was 4.5 percent.

In times of high unemployment, the government uses different tactics to create new jobs. For example, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Roosevelt administration hired millions of Americans for public works projects such as planting trees, stringing power lines in rural areas, and constructing public buildings, bridges, and dams. Or, as is commonly done today, the government can lower taxes and interest rates to encourage businesses to expand their operations and hire more workers.

Recession. A recession is a period of economic decline and is marked by rising unemployment and declining production, spending, and consumer demand.

To stimulate economic growth, the Federal Reserve Board can make more money available to banks for lending by lowering the interest rate it charges banks.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Consumers tend to spend more money on expensive goods when they believe the economy is doing well. Incomes and spending have increased in recent years.

Another way the government can combat a recession is by reducing taxes. Lowering taxes puts more cash in consumers' pockets. Additional cash encourages consumer spending on goods and services.

Historically, the U.S. economy has gone through cycles of recession and recovery. The most recent recession began in 1990, following strong economic growth in the 1980s. Although the recession ended in the spring of 1991, job creation and consumer confidence—robust in past recoveries—were sluggish at best. By the end of 1992, growth began to pick up. That trend continued in 1999, with the economy growing at a healthy 3 to 5 percent a year.

Productivity. The productivity rate refers to the amount of goods produced per person per hour. A rising rate of productivity usually leads to higher wages, higher profits, and lower prices. Beginning in the 1960s and continuing until the early 1990s, productivity in some countries—particularly Japan—increased more than it did in the United States. This increase in foreign productivity meant that products made in other countries were less expensive to produce than comparable products made in the United States. As a result, they sold better in all markets.

U.S. manufacturers found that they either had to spend millions of dollars modernizing their factories to increase productivity or give up manufacturing in the United States altogether. Some companies moved their factories out of the country to avoid the costs of meeting government safety and antipollution regulations and the high wages they had to pay American workers. Others modernized and found ways to reduce costs so they did not have to move overseas.

Although high productivity is generally considered good for the economy, it can change the nature of the workforce and temporarily increase unemployment. For example, as new machines and computers on assembly lines take over more and more human roles, workers find themselves unemployed or working in nonmanufacturing fields such as the service or information industries, two segments of the U.S. economy that are still growing.

In recent years, the productivity and the length of the average workweek of American workers have increased. These increases have allowed companies to produce more goods and services without hiring more employees. In 1998, productivity rose 2.2 percent to safeguard the United States' status as one of the most productive nations in the world.

International Interdependence. The United States is the world's largest exporter and importer. The huge market for foreign goods in the United States creates jobs overseas and keeps foreign workers employed. Similarly, the health of the U.S. economy depends on how well American products sell in foreign markets. During the early 1990s, many Americans lost their jobs because sales of U.S. products declined overseas.

Economic conditions in one country can often affect the entire global economy. Eight of the world's leading industrial nations meet annually at a "Group of Eight" (G-8) summit to coordinate policies for worldwide economic issues. The G-8 countries—Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States—discuss trade agreements, unemployment problems, and economic difficulties and try to develop cooperative solutions.

IT'S LUCRATIVE AT THE TOP

According to *Business Week* magazine, chief executive officers (CEOs) in the United States averaged a 35 percent pay raise in 1997. During that same year, corporate profits rose 5 percent, white-collar workers saw a 3.8 percent pay raise on average, and blue-collar workers received a 2.6 percent increase in earnings. *Business Week* analyzed the compensation of the top two executives at 365 Fortune 500 companies and found that total compensation rose to an average of almost $8 million, up from $6 million in 1996. Executives made 326 times more than the average factory worker in 1997; in 1980, CEOs made 42 times as much as factory workers. While some criticize this wage gap, others believe that good leaders should be rewarded. Supporters of CEO salaries point out that much of their earnings take the form of stock options in their company. Thus, as company performance improves so do CEO salaries.

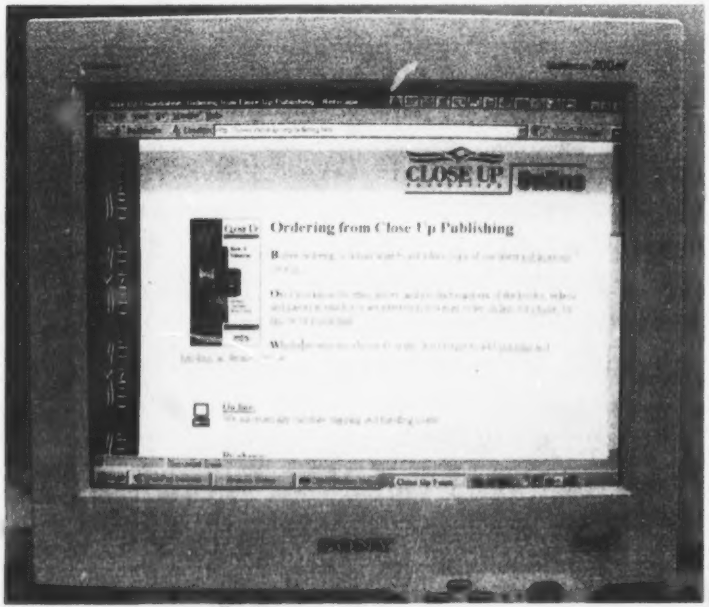
Recent economic problems in many Asian countries, including Japan, have hurt some U.S. companies that sell their products to these markets. If U.S. companies cannot sell their goods and services to these large regions, they may have to scale back their operations and lay off workers. Recognizing that problems overseas could eventually harm the U.S. economies, President Clinton has urged nations in Europe and Asia to reduce trade barriers.

The Economy of the 1980s and 1990s

Supply-Side Economics. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan promoted supply-side economics, a policy that aimed to raise employment and lower inflation by increasing the supply of goods and services in the economy. President Reagan believed that cutting tax rates would give businesses and consumers more cash to invest in new, more efficient machinery and technological advances. These advances, he maintained, would increase productivity and profits. Supporters of Reagan's plan believed that an increase in profits would automatically make tax revenues go up, thereby reducing the budget deficit naturally, without inflation and government interference. Congress approved Reagan's plan and the U.S. economy grew steadily from 1983 to 1990.

From Deficit to Surplus. Despite healthy economic growth during much of the 1980s, the federal budget deficit—the amount by which federal government expenditures exceed revenue each year—tripled. While some lawmakers blamed increased defense spending and tax cuts of the Reagan and Bush administrations, others pointed to spending on programs such as Social Security and Medicare as the main reason for the rising deficit. The economic recession during the early 1990s reduced tax revenue, deepening the deficit.

In 1997, President Bill Clinton and Congress agreed on a plan to balance the budget by 2002. However, by 1998, thanks to the growing economy and spending limitations, the annual budget deficit had been eliminated and lawmakers were projecting surpluses well into the next century. Still, many are concerned about lowering the overall national debt, which spiraled upward during all those years of deficits prior to 1998.



For many businesses, the Internet offers limitless potential to market their goods and services. Today, Americans can do everything from buy and trade stocks to purchase clothes, books, and phone service on-line.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

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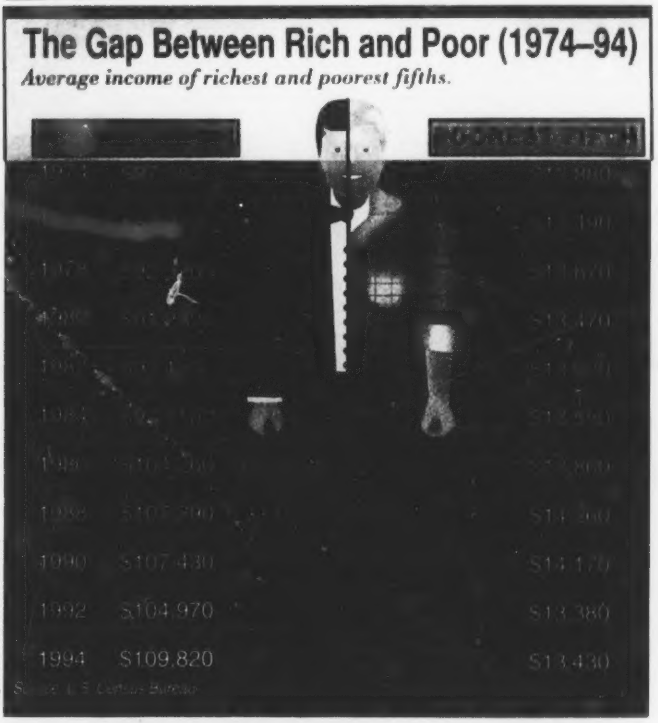
The American Economy Today. Although the U.S. economy is strong, many people are pessimistic about the future. Part of this anxiety can be traced to the growing wage inequality between upper- and lower-income Americans—a trend known as the "income gap."



Glasgow & Associates

The annual incomes of the wealthiest American families have increased more than those of the poorest, contributing to a growing income gap.

The Income Gap. Since 1964, annual incomes of the wealthiest of American families (top 20 percent) have risen more than 44 percent. In stark contrast, annual incomes of the poorest American families (bottom 20 percent) have risen only 7 percent. Some economists say that as businesses and industries began relying more on technology, workers without technical skills, or the means to acquire them, fell even further behind.

Others believe that a capitalist economy naturally produces some workers who prosper and others who do not. Whatever the cause, many economists agree that the economic classes in the United States are becoming more polarized. While some experts view the widening income gap in the United States as a disturbing development, others argue that its potential harm to American society is being overstated. Some lawmakers believe that the federal government should take an active role in establishing more economic equality in the United States.

The Stock Market. Over the last few years, the growing stock market has contributed to the booming economy by helping people's investments grow. In the stock market, people buy or invest in businesses and

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corporations. If businesses make money or profits, their stocks generally go up in value. Stock prices are also affected by the global economy. For example, the ups and downs of the stock markets in Asian countries could affect the United States. Nonetheless, throughout 1998, the U.S. stock market continued to break records.

CURRENT ISSUES

A Higher Minimum Wage? In 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law the Fair Labor Standards Act, which established a national minimum wage of twenty-five cents per hour. The legislation was intended to prevent the exploitation of workers and provide unskilled and part-time workers with a guaranteed wage level. Since 1938, the minimum wage has been increased eighteen times, most recently in 1997 to $5.15. In 1998, President Clinton proposed hiking the minimum wage to $6.15 over two years.

Supporters of this proposal believe raising the minimum wage is an effective way to help low-income Americans lift themselves and their families out of poverty. They point to statistics that suggest that "the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer." According to supporters, boosting the minimum wage would reduce income inequality in America while enabling families to earn a decent standard of living. Proponents also believe that a higher minimum wage rewards work and assists in efforts to help low-income Americans move off welfare.

However, critics point out that raising the minimum wage is not free—someone has to pay for it. They believe that "someone" is often the person the minimum wage is designed to help. Many believe that business owners, faced with paying a higher wage, will hire fewer low-skilled Americans. In addition, many lawmakers contend that businesses may

CONFIDENT CONSUMERS

Buoyed by the strong U.S. economy, American consumers went on a spending binge in 1998, as overall spending for the year rose 4.8 percent. However, the savings rate—the measure of how much of their paychecks consumers put into bank accounts or other savings vehicles—rose only 0.5 percent, the weakest rate since the Great Depression. Experts warn that economic good times do not last forever and that Americans need to save more money to prepare themselves for the inevitable, if not imminent, "rainy day."

Close Up Foundation/Renee Bouchard

Most Americans believe that the income tax system is too complex. Although discontent about the current system is widespread, many disagree over what sort of tax structure should replace it.

choose to offset costs of a higher minimum wage by raising prices or cutting back on services. They believe that mandating another hike in the minimum wage is a bad economic policy that, in the long run, harms low-skilled Americans and consumers.

Tax Reform. For decades, the American people have complained that the U.S. income tax system is too complicated and unfair. Many lawmakers and economists favor simplifying the current system, while others would replace what they believe is a complex and burdensome income tax system with a simple flat tax. Under a flat tax, all Americans, regardless of income, would pay the same rate of 16 to 20 percent, depending on the specific proposal.

Still others have suggested eliminating the income tax system entirely and replacing it with a national sales tax. Many states and localities already use sales taxes to raise revenues. Instead of paying taxes on their incomes at the end of the year, Americans would pay a 15 percent fee when they spend money on goods or services. Under this plan, Americans who spend the most would pay the most taxes.

Those who support replacing the entire system say that the new plans, such as the flat tax or the national sales tax, would be a more efficient way to collect the nation's revenue. If the tax system were completely overhauled, paying taxes could become

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COUNTDOWN TO THE MILLENNIUM BUG

January 1, 2000, not only marks the dawn of a new century but also, if predictions prove correct, the onset of the most dangerous computer glitch in history—the so-called Y2K problem or Millennium Bug. The Y2K problem stems from the fact that millions of computers were programmed to process only the last two digits of a year, assuming that the first two would be 1 and 9. When the millennium arrives, however, the machines will understand the year "00" not as 2000 but as 1900, potentially causing them to shut down or stop working properly. This defect could have dire consequences for the U.S. and global economies. However, if every company fixes its system in time, the Y2K glitch—even with a repair cost of $600 billion—may not harm the world economy.

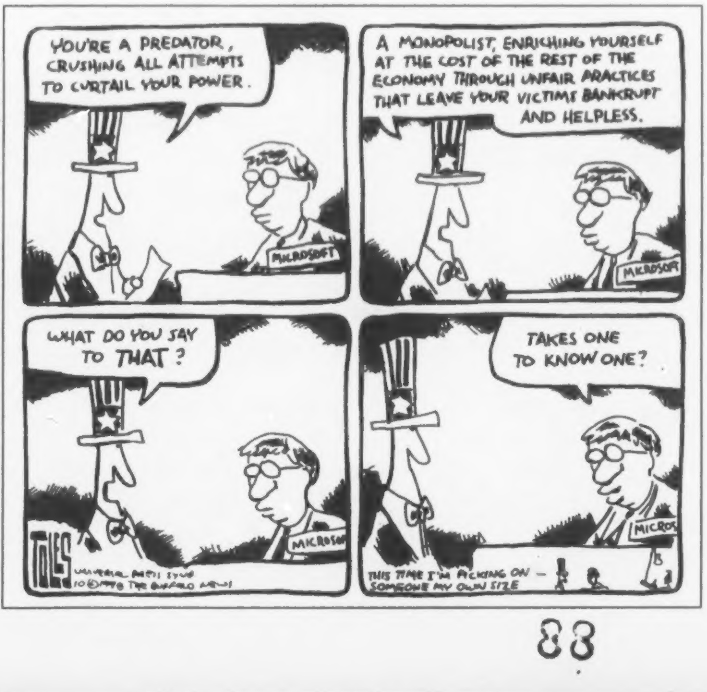
a simple and anxiety-free task. Proponents say that either plan would likely mean less taxes for many Americans and free up more income to save and invest, leading to a stronger economy.

Opponents of these proposals say the current tax system is fair because it demands more taxes from those who make more money. A flat tax would cut the tax rate for the wealthiest Americans and collect only slightly more or the same amount of taxes from the rest of the population. Critics also say that a national sales tax would be difficult and costly to enforce. They also fear that low-income Americans, who must spend a larger proportion of their incomes, would pay more in taxes under this plan while high-income Americans would pay less in taxes.

Reevaluating Antitrust Laws. Although the United States has a free-market economic system, the U.S. government still has a role in regulating the economy. One of its main functions is to ensure that no single company has a corner, or "monopoly," on a product or service. To protect competition in the marketplace, the government employs antitrust laws. Antitrust laws first emerged during the late nineteenth century after wealthy industrialists formed "trusts" to buy up competitors. They drove their competitors out of business and then raised prices. Public outcry led to the passage of the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890, which outlaws the monopolizing of any part of interstate trade or commerce.

In September 1998, one of the most important antitrust suits in history got underway—*United States v. Microsoft.* The federal government charged the computer software giant, led by Bill Gates, with violating the Sherman Antitrust Act by including its Internet Explorer browser with its Windows operating system. The U.S. Justice Department believed Microsoft was deliberately trying to push competitors, such as Netscape, out of the Web browser business. U.S. attorney general Janet Reno accused Microsoft of "unlawfully taking advantage of its Windows monopoly to protect and extend that monopoly and undermine consumer choice." By 1998, the Microsoft Windows operating system had been installed on 90 percent of all home computers.

The Microsoft lawsuit provoked vocal debate over the viability of nineteenth century antitrust laws in the economy of the 1990s. Critics of the government's action against Microsoft believe that these regulations should not be applied to the ever-changing world of


YOU'RE A PREDATOR, CRUSHING ALL ATTEMPTS TO CURTAIL YOUR POWER.
MICROSOFT
A MONOPOLIST, ENRICHING YOURSELF AT THE COST OF THE REST OF THE ECONOMY THROUGH UNFAIR PRACTICES THAT LEAVE YOUR VICTIMS BANKRUPT AND HELPLESS.
MICROSOFT
WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?
MICROSO
TOLES
TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE?
MICROS
THIS TIME I'M PICKING ON — SOMEONE MY OWN SIZE

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the information technology marketplace. They argue that the federal government is ill-equipped to regulate an industry that thrives on innovation and dynamic change. Critics also contend that antitrust laws threaten to break up such companies when they should be encouraging them to grow and compete in the world market. Many businesspeople and lawmakers fear that if outdated antitrust laws continue to interfere in the computer and information industry, lawyers, regulators, and bureaucrats will dictate innovation.

Supporters of the government's actions contend that the domination of the Windows operating system clearly constitutes a monopoly. Microsoft was, in the words of one expert, "just getting too big." Had it been permitted to continue its business practices, competition in the industry would eventually have become extinct. Supporters of current antitrust laws also point to the recent "merger mania"—the consolidation of two or more companies into one corporation. This trend is affecting the banking and health industries and, according to some, suffocating competition. Many lawmakers believe that in order to promote consumer choice and competition, antitrust laws must be obeyed and enforced.

OUTLOOK

In 1998, the American economy continued to grow, as unemployment and inflation remained low. However, the current optimism about the strength of the economy is not shared by a large portion of the public. Some Americans are pessimistic about the future of their country in the increasingly interdependent global economy. Wages for many workers are not increasing, and the standard of living for many middle-income families is slipping. Should the federal government play a more active role in the economy? Should the tax system be reformed? The president and Congress are debating these and other issues as the United States prepares to compete in the world economy of the twenty-first century.

THE DEBATE: THE ECONOMY

The government should raise the minimum wage.

PRO: A family cannot live decently if the head of the household is making only the current minimum wage of $5.15 per hour. Increasing the minimum wage would enable these families to live better lives and help close the income gap. Raising the minimum wage also provides an incentive to work and stay off welfare, by making work more attractive to welfare recipients.

CON: A higher minimum wage has a price. If it were increased again, many employers would find a way to shift the costs onto either job seekers or consumers. They would either abolish jobs or make goods and services more expensive. Consequently, raising the minimum wage would unintentionally hurt the very people—low income Americans—it is designed to help.

The government should abandon the current tax system.

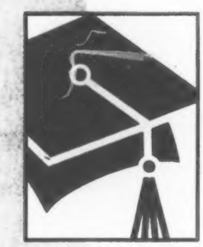
PRO: Too complicated and unfair, the income tax system is an obstacle to greater economic prosperity. The entire process should be simplified. Replacing the current system with either a flat tax or national sales tax would allow Americans to keep more of their own money, encouraging them to spend and save more. And it would allow them to complete their own tax returns without outside help.

CON: The income tax system is fair because it demands more taxes from those who earn the most. A flat tax would likely benefit only the wealthiest Americans. A national sales tax would force lower-income Americans, who spend proportionately more of their incomes, to pay more—not less—in taxes. Overhauling the tax system would also result in less government revenue.

The government should reform its antitrust laws.

PRO: Antitrust laws do more to stifle innovation than protect consumers and competition. Such laws are nothing more than government regulation of the economy and threaten to give bureaucrats and lawyers the power to decide what consumers buy and at what price. These laws are outdated and should not be applied to the dynamic information technology marketplace. In addition, the United States needs large, powerful companies to compete in the global market—not antitrust laws to break them up.

CON: Companies like Microsoft are monopolies and need to be reined in before American consumers are victimized by a lack of competition and higher prices. For more than a century, U.S. antitrust laws have regulated companies that intentionally drive other companies out of business so they can corner the market on a product or service for their own profit. Competition and consumer choice are two key tenets of a free-market system. Without strong antitrust laws, both would be extinct.



EDUCATION

Many Americans believe that public education in the United States needs to improve. As localities across the country struggle to provide adequate public services with fewer and fewer tax dollars, schools—and their students—often suffer. Overcrowded classrooms and violence on school grounds are just two of the problems confronting school officials. Faced with the challenge of finding solutions, parents in local school districts and lawmakers in Washington generally agree that reforms are needed.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should public schools provide bilingual education?
- Should the government give parents vouchers to pay for private schools?
- Should national teacher training be reformed?

Unfortunately, the problems do not end with the public school system. The cost of higher education continues to soar, preventing many young Americans from attending college. Many who do attend must pay back huge loans after they graduate.

Although many educators believe that the federal government should have some role in improving the quality of public schools, others say that state and local governments will do a better job. Many parents, concerned that their children will not be prepared for the challenges of the twenty-first century, have demanded improvements in their community's schools. President Bill Clinton promised to make education reform a top priority of his second term in office. Ultimately, the national dialogue will have to involve all participants if Americans are to improve their nation's education system.

BACKGROUND

The American School System

Community Approach. Americans have always valued education. The Puritans viewed education as an important means of passing on religious teachings. Later, Americans thought that publicly supported schools could wipe out the legacy of the British system, where the ability to read and write separated the economic classes. Since its inception in the mid-1800s, the public school system has enabled immigrant children to become Americans, teaching them the English language and the skills necessary to thrive in the United States.

The U.S. public school system is highly decentralized, with local and state governments having the most control. Local school districts determine programs of study, select books, and hire teachers. A superintendent manages each school district, while a school board, usually elected by the people, makes budget and policy decisions. A school district may encompass an entire county or city or just a small geographical segment of a community. Some Americans say that a major problem with the U.S. education system is that schools are often funded unequally since local real estate taxes, commonly used to finance education, vary widely. Wealthy districts with high property values can afford better schools and teachers than can districts with low property values.

State governments commonly distribute state funds to local schools, set accreditation standards, certify teachers, and provide other guidelines for public schools. The federal government remained generally uninvolved in public education until the U.S. Supreme Court ended school segregation in 1954. In the 1960s, the government began to look at improving education as a way to fight poverty.

School Desegregation. In the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*

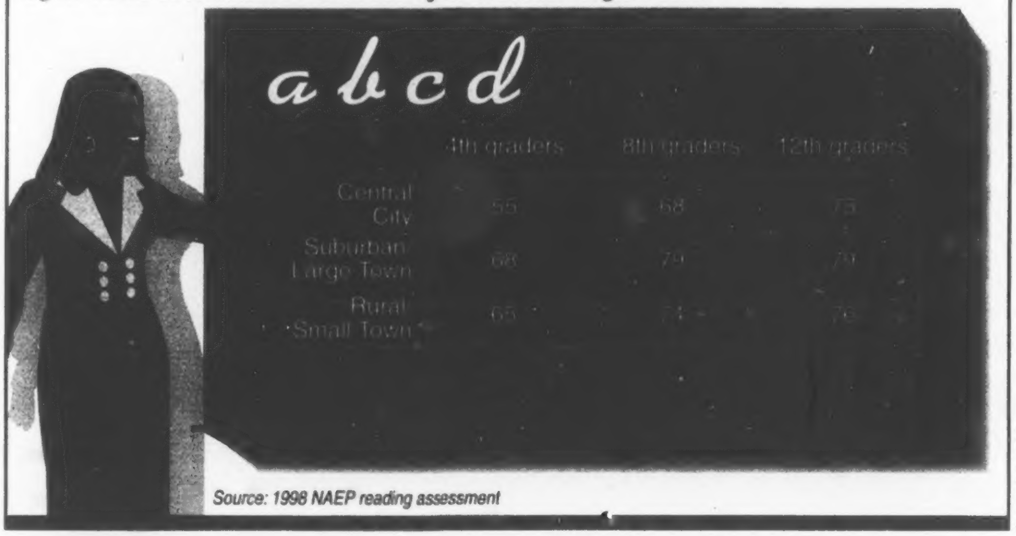
(1954), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racially segregated public schools were unconstitutional, saying that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Later court decisions ordered schools to begin desegregating immediately. To comply, many school districts began busing students to schools outside their neighborhoods to bring together children of different races and ethnic backgrounds. In 1991, the Supreme Court ruled that school districts can be released from court-ordered busing plans if they have done their best to eliminate the effects of segregation.

Some school systems have tried to encourage integration by establishing magnet schools. These schools attract students from different neighborhoods by specializing in areas such as the performing arts, science, mathematics, or foreign languages.

Most states allow citizens to organize charter schools—publicly funded schools with specific educational goals and innovative practices. Charter schools tend to be smaller and more racially integrated than

Learning to Read

Percentage of students, by geographic location, who scored at the basic level or higher on the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress Exam



	4th graders	8th graders	12th graders
Central City	55	68	75
Suburban/ Large Town	68	79	79
Rural/ Small Town	65	74	76

Source: 1998 NAEP reading assessment

Glasgow & Associates

Many Americans are alarmed by the low percentage of students with basic skills in reading. The statistics are worse for students in urban school districts than for those in suburban and rural school districts.

Robert Harbison/The Christian Science Monitor

At KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program) Academy in Houston, Texas, fifth- through eigth-grade students spend forty-five minutes a day reading novels. This innovative charter school was begun in 1995 to help raise the test scores of at-risk students.

other public schools. In spite of these efforts, studies suggest that the nation's schools are becoming resegregated as wealthier residents move to the suburbs or send their children to private schools, leaving mostly lower-income minorities behind to cope with deteriorating inner-city schools.

The Great Society. In the 1960s, President Lyndon Johnson addressed the problem of poverty through his Great Society programs. He proposed three new federal education programs: the Economic Opportunity Act (1964), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), and the Higher Education Act (1965). Included in these laws were provisions establishing adult literacy programs, financing loans for college students, and funding Project Head Start. Head Start provides educational, nutritional, and health-related programs for disadvantaged, preschool-aged children.

Education Today. After more than a decade of increased state and federal spending and measurable improvement in many areas, public education reform remains a top concern among Americans. As the need to produce highly skilled, high-tech workers grows, great concern exists over how the test scores of U.S. students compare to students from other countries. Politicians, parents, and educators hope that the most recent reform measures will help solve these problems.

CURRENT ISSUES

The Fight Over Bilingual Education. Most Americans agree that it is necessary to help recently immigrated children learn to speak English—one of the most important tools they will need to succeed in their new country. What fewer Americans agree on is how the nation's public schools can best meet that challenge, particularly at a time when immigration to the United States is at a recent high. Since the passage of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968, the system of teaching students core academic subjects in their native language, while gradually integrating the teaching of English, has been the norm in many school districts. Thirty years later, many think bilingual education was and is an expensive failure; others say it is still the best way to teach English to the millions of public school students who have limited language abilities.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Language instruction for non-native English speakers takes many forms. In one type of innovative program, native and non-native English speakers are grouped together in the same class, which is taught in two languages. Non-English speakers benefit from working with their English-speaking peers; native speakers have the chance to learn another language.

California became the first state to attempt to dismantle its bilingual education system, adopting instead an English-immersion program. Proposition 227, also known as "English for the Children," was approved by a 61 percent majority in a June 1998 vote. It allows for a one-year, intensive English-immersion program for the state's 1.4 million students with limited English proficiency, followed by transition into mainstream English classes. The controversial law contains an option for parents to request waivers that allow their children to remain in bilingual classrooms. This possibility, along with numerous court challenges by civil rights groups and local school districts, created an anxious atmosphere when California's schools opened in the fall of 1998. Whether the courts will overrule the popularly approved measure remains to be seen.

Those who oppose bilingual education argue that it is a failed system that has inadequately prepared students to speak English fluently. They cite the fact that less than 10 percent of bilingual students actually transfer into mainstream English-speaking classes each year, leaving numerous students languishing in segregated classrooms where they have little opportunity to communicate with their English-speaking peers. Critics also point to disturbing statistics that indicate the dropout rate for Hispanic students is 30 percent, more than four times that of whites. Many of those students came from bilingual classrooms.

On the other hand, supporters of bilingual education argue it is still the most pedagogically sound way of teaching English while at the same time keeping students at age-appropriate academic levels. They believe that students are best served by learning to read and write in their native language and then "transitioning" those skills to English. Many proponents contend that anti-bilingual efforts are both racist and anti-immigrant. Those who have specifically criticized California's Proposition 227 say that while one year of intensive English instruction may be enough time to teach "playground English," it is not nearly enough time for students to learn "academic English"—the ability to communicate concepts and ideas effectively.

A NEW CHARTER FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION?

Since 1992, more than 800 charter schools have opened in the United States, making the charter concept one of the most visible reform efforts in public education. Meant to offer parents options in public education, charter schools are publicly funded yet exempt from most school district regulations. Instead, these schools must adhere only to their performance-based charter, which outlines specific goals that schools must meet to retain their charters. Advocates claim that charter schools offer parents alternatives to an often bureaucratic and unwieldy public school system, and give teachers opportunities for academic innovation. Critics counter that charter schools pose major accountability problems and may promote elitism and even racial segregation.

School Choice. Many observers of the public school system say that students are not getting the education they deserve because parents have little say in where their children go to school. They contend that schools have no incentive to improve because they have guaranteed student enrollments based on geography, not on quality. By giving parents the choice of where to send their children, these critics argue, schools—much like businesses in a free-market economy—would have to improve to attract students.

In the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the idea of "school choice" became one of the most popular education reform proposals. One controversial version of school choice involves issuing vouchers to parents to help them pay for their children's education at a private school. Many parents with children in poor public schools, and parents who are already paying tuition fees at private schools, champion the idea. Over the past few years, some cities—such as Cleveland and Milwaukee—have experimented with vouchers, producing mixed results. In 1998, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the state's voucher system—which allows students to use vouchers to attend religious schools—is constitutional, a victory for school choice advocates nationwide. The United States Supreme Court declined to review the case.

Supporters of school voucher plans say holding schools accountable for their performance would force them to improve. According to proponents, a voucher system would result, at least in the short-term, in a drop in enrollments—and available funds—at substandard schools. This would force teachers and administrators at these schools to fix

FEWER STUDENTS, BETTER RESULTS?

In 1998, President Bill Clinton proposed a plan to lower the national average class size in the first three grades by hiring 100,000 new teachers. The $1.1 billion appropriated by Congress will help fund 30,000 new hires. A handful of states, including Texas and California, have already initiated class-size reductions. Proponents believe that lowering class sizes, particularly in inner-city schools, will allow teachers to give more individual attention to students who need it. The nation's largest teachers organization—the National Education Association—has long pushed for such measures. Critics argue that there is no conclusive research indicating that smaller class size produces better students. They also cite the fact that class size has been dropping steadily since the 1950s without substantial improvement.

problems or else risk being closed. Those who favor vouchers believe that low-income parents should have the opportunity to choose a school based on what is best for their children, much like parents who can afford private school do already. Encouraging public schools to improve in order to compete for students will raise the quality of the entire educational system.

Opponents argue that only those students who are fortunate enough to be accepted at private schools will benefit from vouchers. They say that there is no solid evidence that voucher systems improve schools or raise student test scores. Opponents also contend that vouchers would hurt public schools by enticing the most motivated students and their parents—often the most involved—to leave the system. Thus, vouchers would leave public schools void of the very students and parents who are most likely to effect positive change. Furthermore, critics argue that voucher programs are unconstitutional because government-funded vouchers used to pay for education at religious schools may violate the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

Testing Teachers? In July 1998, citizens in Massachusetts received some shocking news about the state's newest educators: of 1800 prospective teachers, 59 percent failed the state's new certification test. While debate has raged for years about standards and testing for the nation's students, some in the education reform movement have focused their energy on improving teacher quality and revamping outdated teacher-training methods. These opinions were echoed in a landmark report released in 1996 by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future entitled "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," which criticized teacher education.

In his 1999 State of the Union address, President Bill Clinton proposed an Education Accountability Act, which would tie federal education funds to a school district's performance and progress. Part of this plan would hold districts responsible for the quality of their staffs, including implementing a performance exam for new teachers.

Some reformers believe that America's schools of education, where new teachers are trained, must change their curricula to allow for more opportunities for student teachers to work with veteran teachers in real classrooms. Here, a student teacher confers with her mentor in an elementary classroom.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Critics of the current situation cite disturbing statistics about the nation's public school teachers. Nationally, one in four teachers is hired without having fully completed the licensure requirements of the state in which they are working. Of the current pool of middle school and high school teachers, approximately 35 percent do not hold undergraduate majors or minors in the subject areas they teach. The problem is particularly acute in the fields of math and science, and in low-income school districts.

Many Americans say that teaching must be professionalized by instituting a rigorous training and certification process. Most believe that the nation's schools of education must do a better job of integrating theory and application, and must forge more partnerships with local and regional school districts to provide real-world experience. Some lawmakers have suggested requiring teachers to have an academic degree, instead of the more traditional education degree that emphasizes pedagogy over content. Other proponents of reform say that the informal system of tenure that reigns at most public schools must end so that ineffective teachers can be more easily dismissed. They also encourage "peer review" programs where qualified "master" teachers evaluate other teachers' performances.

But not everyone thinks that focusing on teacher quality is the best way to serve America's students right now. Many believe that if admissions standards at schools of education are raised and states become more strict about licensing and certification requirements, then teacher shortages, already acute in some areas, will worsen. (Current estimates predict that 2 million new teachers will be needed in the next ten years.) Though both major teachers unions have endorsed peer review policies,

LEARNING AT HOME

According to researchers' estimates, more than 1 million American children are now being schooled at home, most often by a parent. Most parents cite religious and moral reasons, a desire for greater family closeness, and concern over their children's safety and exposure to social ills at traditional schools as the primary reasons for homeschooling. All fifty states allow home education; thirty-seven have set homeschooling standards ranging from specifying subject matter to annual testing. The movement has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade, and supporters say that the Internet's vast on-line resources have been instrumental in many mainstream families' decisions to homeschool. Critics voice concerns over the lack of accountability for homeschool teachers. Others argue that homeschooled children lose the opportunities for socialization and extracurricular activities that traditional schools provide.

they still contend that the tenure system protects teachers from politically motivated dismissals, a historical reality. Recently, legislators from both parties have proposed various programs to redirect federal education funds to teacher education and recruitment efforts. Some critics are concerned about the growing involvement of the federal government in an area that most Americans believe is best left to local and state direction.

OUTLOOK

As school districts nationwide struggle with mediocre test scores, shrinking budgets, and facilities that are falling into disrepair, some parents have demanded more control over how their children are educated. How local and state governments handle these challenges may be decided in part by what role the federal government plays in education reform. Education is an issue that is a top priority for citizens and lawmakers alike. Although they may disagree on how to improve the educational system in the United States, they agree that the future success of America's children will likely be determined by the education they receive today.

THE DEBATE: EDUCATION

Public schools should provide bilingual education.

PRO: Bilingual education is the best way to teach non-native English speakers the language, while ensuring that they remain at appropriate academic levels in core subjects. One year of English immersion is not enough to give students the base they need to succeed academically. Furthermore, anti-bilingual initiatives are racist and anti-immigrant and will keep America's newest residents and citizens at a serious economic disadvantage for years.

CON: Bilingual education has failed to teach children to speak English fluently. Hispanic students, who are often stuck in bilingual programs, have the highest dropout rate of any group. Far too few students are able to transfer into mainstream English language classes each year, leaving numerous segregated bilingual classrooms. Recent immigrants need to learn English as quickly as possible, and that requires immersion programs.

The government should give parents vouchers to pay for private schools.

PRO: Parents, no matter their income, should have the right to choose where their children go to school. Public schools will only improve if parents can hold them accountable by moving their children to better schools. The problems in the public school system are not due to lack of funds, but rather poor management and inefficiency. Giving parents vouchers to help send their children to private schools will force public schools to improve if they want to attract students and survive.

CON: School vouchers will help only those students who are accepted to private schools. There is no evidence that vouchers have improved the school systems where they have been tried. Communities need good students and interested parents to force reform in the current public education system, not abandon it in favor of private schools. Allowing parents to use government-funded vouchers to send their children to religious schools violates the separation of church and state.

National teacher training should be reformed.

PRO: The field of teaching must be professionalized, like law and medicine. Doing so requires a commitment to raising training and certification standards. Schools of education must provide better opportunities for student-teachers to integrate teaching theory and real-world application. States should require all new teachers to be fully licensed and have academic degrees, and teacher tenure should be eliminated.

CON: While it is true that many of the nation's teachers are underqualified, raising admissions standards at schools of education and state certification standards will only further teacher shortages, particularly in poor urban areas. Eliminating teacher tenure invites politically motivated dismissals. Local and state officials should set their own teacher standards, not the federal government.

HEALTH CARE AND AGING

Americans spend more on medical care than people in any other nation do—more than $1 trillion in 1997. The United States' annual health care bill is projected to soar to $1.5 trillion by 2000. Despite this huge expenditure, about 43 million Americans have no health insurance. Soaring medical costs and a growing number of uninsured Americans have contributed to what many believe is a health care crisis. Lawmakers in Washington are debating a variety of proposals to cut health care costs and make it accessible to more Americans.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should Congress pass a "patient's bill of rights"?
- Should Medicare be expanded?
- Should the drug approval process be reformed?

Many men and women cannot afford private medical insurance yet do not qualify for government benefits. Even people who have insurance frequently discover that they cannot afford to pay the deductible (the amount of money patients must pay before their insurance coverage begins), so they do without medical treatment. Many believe that Congress needs to reform Medicare and Medicaid, two large federal programs that provide health care to older, disabled, and low-income Americans. Experts predict that unless lawmakers approve significant reforms, Medicare could go bankrupt early next century.

President Bill Clinton and Congress are also grappling with the growing concern over managed care. In the 1990s, managed care has become commonplace across the country. Critics argue that managed care recklessly rations medical treatment, others say that it is necessary to control the spiraling costs that threaten the entire U.S. health care system.

BACKGROUND

Making Health Care Accessible

The Push for Universal Health Care Coverage. Many Americans believe that the government should ensure that everyone receives adequate medical care. Others, however, think that health care is a private responsibility. The debate over government financing for health care has been going on for more than eighty-five years.

In 1912, former president Theodore Roosevelt recommended that health insurance be provided for all Americans. In 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt considered making national health insurance a part of Social Security, his new program to provide financial help to older Americans. However, Roosevelt dropped this idea because he was afraid that a health insurance plan might hurt the Social Security Act's chances for

National Archives

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law Medicare and Medicaid, which provide guaranteed health coverage to older and low-income Americans. Former president Harry Truman, a staunch advocate of national health insurance, looks on.

congressional approval. After World War II, national health insurance became an issue again. President Harry Truman believed that "financial means should not determine the quality and quantity of medical services a citizen receives."

Truman advocated passage of a comprehensive federal insurance program, but Congress blocked his effort. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson introduced civil rights legislation and promoted social programs designed to eliminate poverty and help bring economic well-being to all Americans. Johnson called his plan the Great Society. The capstone of the Great Society was the introduction in 1965 of government financing for health care through Medicare and Medicaid.

Medicare. Today, about 40 million Americans over the age of 65 and people with disabilities receive assistance through Medicare. Medicare consists of two parts. The first part helps pay for hospital nursing

CORBIS

Older Americans consume four times as much in medical services as younger adults. However, because of Medicare more than 99 percent of Americans over the age of 65 have health insurance.

care. Each working person in the United States pays a special payroll tax to fund this hospital insurance. Participants must pay a certain amount out of their own pockets, called a deductible, before Medicare will cover hospital expenses.

The second part of Medicare, supplemental medical insurance, covers 80 percent of doctors' fees, laboratory tests, and other medical expenses. Supplemental medical insurance is optional, and beneficiaries must pay a monthly premium—a payment that buys insurance coverage—to be eligible.

The Medicare Dilemma. The government spent more than $200 billion on Medicare in 1997, about 9 percent of total federal spending. In 1996, the Medicare Board of Trustees reported that the program will go bankrupt early next century unless reforms are implemented. To avoid this crisis, lawmakers in Washington have made saving Medicare from bankruptcy a top legislative priority.

Some policymakers believe that reforming Medicare is essential to accomplishing three related tasks: reducing the national debt, controlling health care costs, and ensuring that the program's funds do not run out. In 1997, to prevent the program's insolvency and to help balance the budget, President Bill Clinton and Congress agreed to cut Medicare spending by almost $120 billion over the next five years. They also planned to restructure the program by raising the cost of monthly premiums and encouraging senior citizens to join health maintenance organizations (HMOs).

In 1998, President Clinton proposed expanding Medicare benefits to early retirees, at age 62, and to displaced workers who are at least 55 years old. Each group would have to pay monthly premiums to receive benefits. Currently, there are 22 million Americans between the ages of 55 and 64; roughly 3 million of these so-called near elderly are uninsured. In 1999, the Clinton administration also urged Congress to use a portion of the federal budget surplus to help keep Medicare solvent.

Medicaid. Medicaid is a joint federal-state program that helps millions of men and women with low incomes pay for health care. The federal government matches state funds for Medicaid; each state establishes its own eligibility requirements based on income and administers its own program. States follow federal regulations on paying for hospital care, long-term nursing care, doctors' fees, laboratory tests, and X-ray examinations. Medicaid also covers the fees and premiums for Medicare recipients who are near the poverty level. In 1997, the federal government spent almost $170 billion on Medicaid.

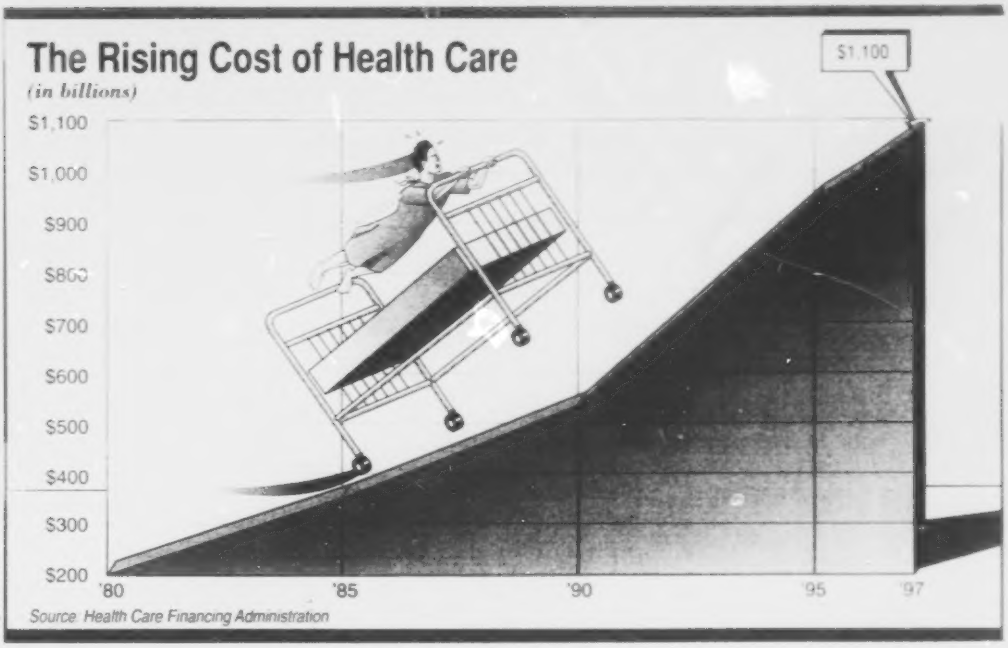
Rising Health Care Costs

A National Expense. For the past twenty-five years, the cost of health care has increased much faster than the overall cost of living. When Medicare and Medicaid were introduced in 1965, spending on medical services by the government, private insurers, and patients totaled about $41 billion a year, with the federal government providing $1.7 billion of the total.

In 1997, annual health expenditures topped $1.1 trillion. Federal, state, and local governments paid almost 50 percent of the total. Some predict health care spending will hit $1.5 trillion by 2000.

Most experts agree that three major developments have fueled the increase in health care costs: (1) the expansion of a system in which government and insurance companies, rather than patients, pay medical bills; (2) the introduction of expensive new medical technologies; and (3) the rapid growth of the older American population.

Government and Insurance Payments. Health care experts believe medical costs have risen because most health care services are paid for by private insurance companies and the government rather than by patients themselves. Some insurers, including the government, cover 90 percent of patients' hospital costs and 80 percent of fees doctors charge. Until the 1990s,



Source: Health Care Financing Administration

Glasgow & Associates

Although it spends more than $1 trillion every year on health care, the United States still has 43 million citizens without health insurance.

most insurers used an "after the fact, fee for service" payment policy. Under this system, hospitals and doctors submit bills directly to insurance companies and are reimbursed for most of their costs. In general, patients were not too concerned about health care costs because they trusted their doctors' judgment and because they knew their insurance companies or the government would pay the bills.

Managed Care. Beginning in 1990, large businesses warned that if escalating health costs were not curtailed, they could no longer afford to provide full health coverage for employees without cutting back on operations or salaries. Businesses began to shepherd employees off their standard fee-for-service plans—in which costs were covered by insurance companies and doctors made all decisions regarding medical care—and onto managed care plans.

Health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are the most common managed care plans. HMOs offer consumers a range of medical services for a set monthly fee. Managed care plans control costs by monitoring health care professionals, requiring preauthorization for hospital visits, and limiting access to expensive specialists. In 1998, more than two-thirds of American workers were enrolled in managed care plans.

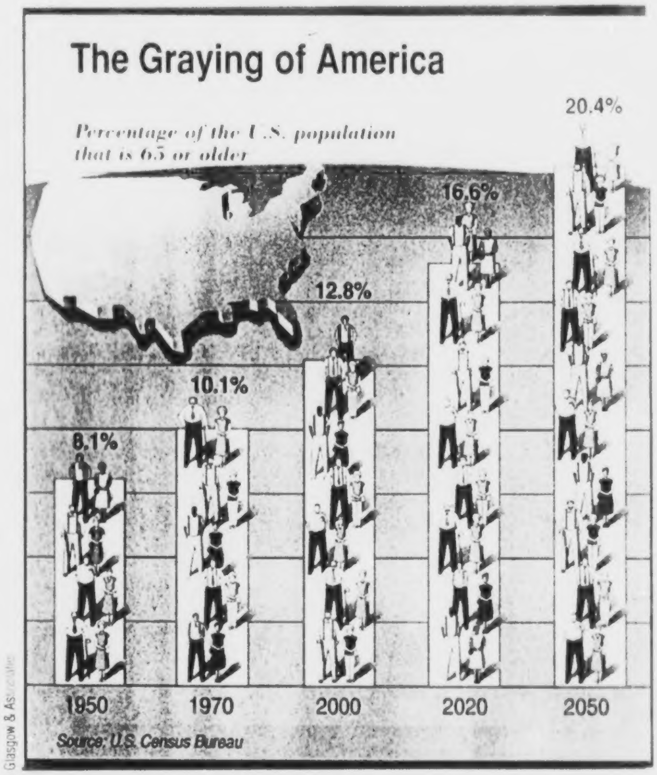
New Technologies. The development of new technologies has increased health care costs. Some medical equipment is extremely expensive and requires highly trained operators who are well paid. It is common for several hospitals in one area to buy the same expensive equipment and offer the same services to attract more patients. The added costs of duplicated services and equipment that is infrequently used are passed on to patients and their insurers. Recent developments in medical technology have also made it possible to prolong life, adding significantly to overall health care costs. Today, organ transplants are commonplace, dialysis is available for kidney failures, respirators keep people breathing when their lungs fail, and machines assist diseased hearts. Doctors are trained to keep patients alive at all costs and to give them the best treatment possible, but these efforts are costly and sometimes cause severe financial strain for patients and their families.

RACIAL AND GENDER BIAS IN HEALTH CARE

A study by Georgetown University in 1999 found that physicians' attitudes toward women and African Americans influence treatment. Using heart disease prognosis as a model, researchers discovered that for every 100 cases where a white male was advised to get high-tech diagnostic tests to look for heart disease, only 60 black men and 60 women were told to get the same test (for black women the rate was only 40 percent). Experts attributed these results to perceptions many doctors have about blacks and women, including assumptions about the lack of access to medical care and health insurance.

America Grows Older. The size of America's older population will dramatically increase as the "baby boom" generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) begins to retire early next century. Some experts believe that by 2020 older Americans will account for about 20 percent of the U.S. population. Consequently, the nation's health care bills will soar.

Health Care Expenses. For the average citizen, health care costs rise with age. Each older American consumes four times as much in medical services as a younger adult and eight times as much as a child. Because of Medicare, fewer than 1 percent of people over the age of 65 do not have health insurance. However, older people still have to pay monthly insurance premiums and a deductible before Medicare will cover any bills.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Glasgow & Associates

The increase in the number of retirees could bankrupt Social Security and Medicare in the next century unless Congress reforms these programs.

Retirement Savings. Recent surveys suggest that many baby boomers do not realize how much money they need to set aside to retire comfortably. Old age is expensive, largely due to health care costs. The elderly traditionally have three sources of income: company pensions, Social Security, and savings. However, fewer companies are now offering pension plans and others are limiting these benefits. Furthermore, some experts predict that Social Security will go bankrupt, or at the very least offer reduced benefits, by the time baby boomers begin collecting their checks. And finally, people are saving less money than previous generations. Consequently, many are worried about whether they will have enough money to retire.

Recent Reform Efforts. In response to the growing concern about the rising cost of health care in the United States, lawmakers in Washington have, in recent years, proposed a number of reform initiatives. In 1993, President Clinton proposed a major overhaul of the health care system. His plan was designed to provide medical coverage, funded by the federal

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government, to all Americans regardless of their income or employment status. However, Congress rejected the plan amid concerns about its costs and the government's ability to provide quality care.

Since then, lawmakers have focused their efforts on significantly smaller reform plans. In 1996, Congress passed the Health Insurance Portability Act, making it easier for people to keep their health insurance even if they change jobs or have a pre-existing medical condition. The following year, President Clinton unveiled a plan to guarantee health care to more than 5 million uninsured children. In addition, both political parties have proposed plans to decrease the cost of Medicare and to prevent private health care costs from spinning out of control.

TRACING THE ORIGINS OF AIDS

For many years, AIDS researchers believed that HIV-1, the main form of the AIDS virus, passed from chimpanzees to humans, triggering the epidemic that infects 35 million people worldwide. But they were unable to locate the data to support this hypothesis. However, in 1999, researchers from the University of Alabama announced that their analysis of the frozen tissue of a dead chimp provided convincing proof that these animals are "the natural host and reservoir for HIV-1." These animals live in Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Congo, and Central African Republic, the region where AIDS is thought to have started.

The AIDS Crisis

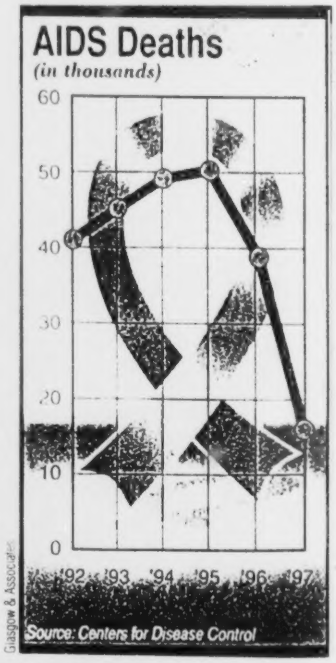
One disease that has received a great deal of attention from medical researchers is acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). There is no known cure for AIDS and no vaccine against the virus that causes it. However, experts say that knowledge about AIDS and appropriate preventative measures can slow its spread.

AIDS is caused by a virus called the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV attacks the body's white blood cells. White blood cells are part of the body's immune system, which helps guard against and fight off infections. When these cells are damaged, the body cannot easily fight off disease. Thus, people with AIDS often die from illnesses that would not have posed a threat to their lives if their immune systems had been functioning properly. Since the illness was first recognized in the early 1980s, about 700,000 Americans have been diagnosed with HIV, and approximately 400,000 have died from AIDS.

Search for a Cure. While the disease has had its most devastating effects in the United States on the homosexual male population, recently the biggest increase in American AIDS cases has occurred among women. People primarily develop AIDS after contact with blood or other bodily fluids infected with HIV. The most common modes of transmission are unprotected sex and intravenous drug use involving shared needles. Before health officials became aware of the AIDS threat, some people contracted the virus through transfusions of tainted blood. Since then, health providers have developed testing measures to make the blood supply safer and have set standards to prevent transmission between health care workers and patients. Some cities distribute free condoms, and other cities, such as New York, sponsor needle-exchange programs in which drug users can turn in used needles for clean ones.

Government Spending. Over the past two years, the federal government's role in the fight against AIDS has increased. Most of the federal funds earmarked for AIDS are spent on research to find a cure for or an immunization against the deadly disease. Some research money is used to test drugs to see if they are safe and effective. The government spends most of the remaining funds on health care services for AIDS patients, as well as public information campaigns.

A Breakthrough. Many AIDS researchers believe they have turned the corner in the fight against the disease. In 1996, the number of AIDS-related deaths actually declined for the first time since the epidemic began. In 1997, the death rate from AIDS fell by nearly 50 percent, the largest single-year decline for a major cause of death ever recorded. This huge drop, due largely to the availability of powerful new drug treatments, moved AIDS off the list of the top ten causes of death in the United States for the first time since 1990.



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Source: Centers for Disease Control

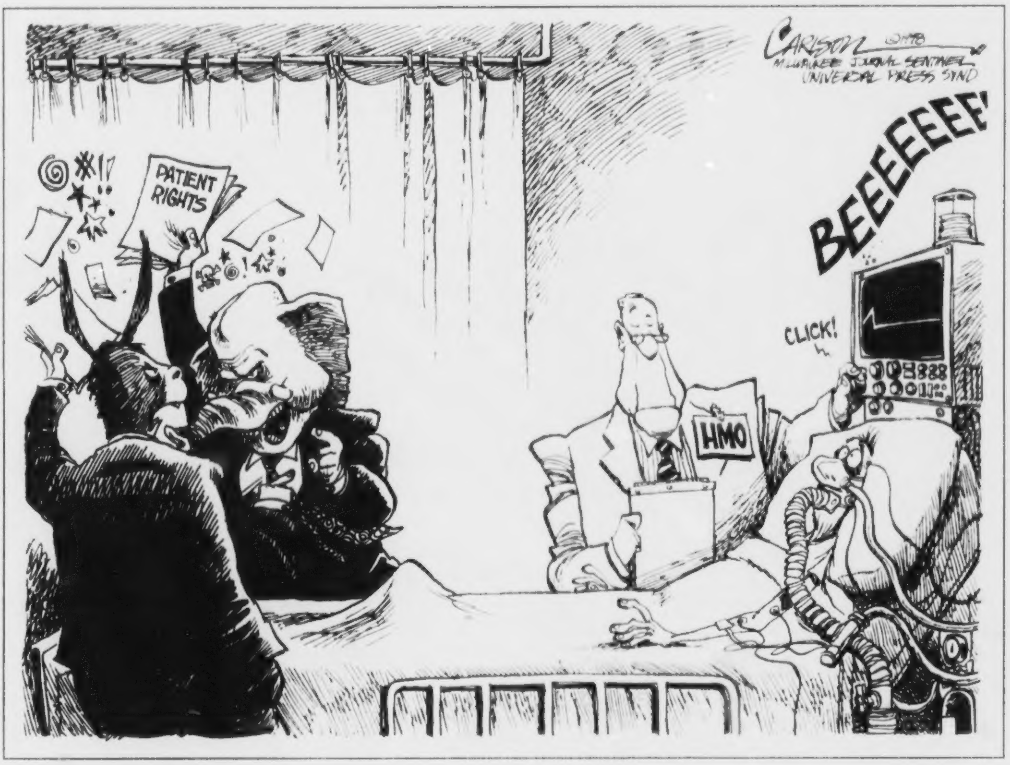
The decline in AIDS-related deaths in the United States in 1997 was the largest single-year decline for a major cause of death ever recorded.

CURRENT ISSUES

A Patient's Bill of Rights. Today, more than 170 million Americans receive their health care through a health maintenance organization (HMO) or some other managed care group. The spread of managed care, most experts believe, is the most important development in U.S. health care in the 1990s. However, as managed care has become more commonplace, many people have become convinced that the system is flawed.

Critics have derided what they see as the HMO focus, which is cutting health care costs at the expense of providing good medical care. They say treatment is being rationed by HMO bureaucrats—"gatekeepers" as they are called—who often ignore patients who need special care because they deem it too expensive and unnecessary. As frustrations over managed care become more vocal, many lawmakers in Congress have called for a "patient's bill of rights" that would return some of the decisionmaking regarding appropriate treatment to doctors and their patients. Such a bill, introduced in Congress in 1998, included provisions to extend more "rights" to patients when dealing with HMOs. Specifically, the bill called for the establishment of a review committee that would hear appeals by patients. The most controversial proposal was to allow patients to sue HMOs for punitive damages. (Currently, patients can sue but only to recover the costs of the treatment denied by the HMO.) Proponents of this legislation believe it makes managed care groups more accountable to consumers while helping restore the public's faith in the U.S. health care system. Because Democrats and Republicans in Congress were unable to agree on final provisions, "patient's bill of rights" legislation did not become law in 1998.

Supporters of managed care respond that HMOs and other organizations have become scapegoats for those Americans who cannot accept that the days of unlimited, fee-for-service medical care are over. Critics of a "patient's bill of rights" contend that men



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and women who have insurance are spoiled and accustomed to "overtreatment," which many blame for contributing to skyrocketing health care costs. While many medical experts concede that managed care is far from perfect, they nonetheless believe that the system is the only viable way of controlling costs while maintaining good, solid medical care. In addition, critics warn that a "patient's bill of rights" will increase health care expenditures because the threat of litigation will drive up the cost of insurance. Consequently, many small businesses will be forced to cut jobs to pay for the increase.

Expanding Medicare. Because Medicare affects older Americans, their families, hospitals, and health care professionals, these groups have all followed the Medicare debate. In 1997, President Clinton expressed concerns for those 3 million Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 who are uninsured. In 1998, he proposed expanding Medicare by offering benefits to some of the so-called near elderly—early retirees, at age 62, and displaced workers who are at least 55 years old. Some of these people would be able to buy Medicare insurance under this new plan. Currently, many in this group are not able to afford health insurance.

Some lawmakers support the proposal because it could enable millions of uninsured Americans to receive health benefits. They believe that the increased costs of expansion would be covered by the premiums that the near elderly would pay. Supporters argue that the program would pay for itself. Those who are eligible would have to pay a monthly premium of $300 or $400, depending on their circumstances. Some point out that this group is twice as likely to have health problems as younger people. They believe that it is the government's job to provide health insurance for this vulnerable group—who cannot afford to wait until they turn 65 to receive benefits—so that they can continue to lead healthy lives.

Opponents of expanding Medicare to the near elderly argue that the program is already on the brink of bankruptcy and should therefore be trimmed. Critics contend that the cost of this expansion and the number of people that will participate are difficult to calculate. They also point out that baby boomers will soon be eligible for Medicare. Consequently, some worry that people will start retiring sooner if they become eligible for Medicare at an earlier age. Experts argue that the government should not encourage early retirement, because more retirees will further strain Medicare and Social Security.

Reforming the FDA. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) makes sure that food, drugs, and cosmetics, as well as all medical devices, are safe for consumers and have truthful labeling. The FDA thoroughly tests all of these products, except food, before approving them. In 1992, Congress passed the Prescription Drug User-Fee Act, which required pharmaceutical companies to pay the fees that the FDA

A TAXING PROBLEM FOR TOBACCO COMPANIES

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

According to tobacco industry analysts, cigarette consumption declined in the United States by 6 to 7 percent in 1998, compared to a 3 percent annual drop in previous years. Experts say that this decrease is due to higher cigarette taxes rather than government warnings about the health risks associated with smoking. States such as Massachusetts, California, and Alaska—which have a $1 dollar-per-pack cigarette tax—may see declines in consumption of up to 15 percent in 1999. A study by the Centers for Disease Control found that lower-income, minority, and younger populations are more likely to quit or cut down on their smoking in response to higher cigarette prices.

accrued from hiring additional reviewers to test their products. This sped up the approval process greatly. In recent years, the number of new products needing FDA approval has grown. This glut is due in part to the demand for new drug therapies for life-threatening diseases such as AIDS. The FDA takes about a year to approve a new drug, a process many believe is too long and one that should be streamlined.

Supporters of streamlining argue that the FDA approval process is blocking people's access to new drug treatments. They assert that especially in the case of AIDS, people are suffering and dying during the time it takes the FDA to approve innovative new drugs. Supporters maintain that because pharmaceutical companies are required to perform many tests on new products, the FDA does not need to carry out such a thorough review. Some experts also contend that FDA testing procedures are outdated and expensive. Consequently, they believe that the FDA should give some of its work to outside researchers to speed up the approval process.

Opponents counter that speeding up the FDA approval process could lead to harmful products getting on the market. They argue that it is important for the FDA to ensure that all new drugs are safe and effective before they can be sold. Extensive testing is important to discover any side effects a new drug treatment might cause, or to make sure a new medical device is sound. Furthermore, many fear that outside researchers could be vulnerable to bias and bribes, and claim that impartial government testing is more fair. Lastly, some point out that the average time it takes the FDA to approve a new product is already declining because of the Prescription Drug User-Fee Act.

OUTLOOK

As health care costs continue to increase dramatically in the United States, the American people are faced with a number of questions about the affordability and quality of their medical care. The spread of managed care, many experts say, may be unpopular with millions of Americans, but it answers the need to cut costs, even if it means sacrificing the extensive care many men and women are used to receiving. In addition, as baby boomers age, the size of the elderly population will grow rapidly. With Medicare heading toward possible bankruptcy in a few years, many Americans debate whether the federal government can afford to continue subsidizing health care for the poor and elderly. These and other important issues have made health care one of the most hotly debated public policy issues of recent years.

THE DEBATE: HEALTH CARE AND AGING

Congress should pass a "patient's bill of rights."

PRO: HMOs and other managed care groups are overly concerned with controlling costs when they should be providing the best possible care for those who need it. Many Americans are not being given the treatment they need because it is deemed too expensive or unnecessary by men and women not qualified to make those decisions. A "patient's bill of rights" will give patients and their doctors more authority in deciding what treatment to pursue, while making HMOs accountable for their decisions.

CON: Managed care may not be a perfect system, but it is the only viable alternative to skyrocketing health costs. A "patient's bill of rights" will increase health care costs because litigation will make insurance more expensive. As the cost of health insurance goes up, smaller companies will be forced to cut back on job creation to cover the new costs. A "patient's bill of rights" will not benefit average Americans, but lawyers and bureaucrats who are called upon to enforce these "rights."

Medicare should be expanded.

PRO: Millions of "near elderly" Americans do not have adequate health coverage. This segment of the population is vulnerable to illness and needs help from the federal government in obtaining health insurance. Many cannot wait until age 65 to qualify for Medicare benefits. Expanding Medicare to cover the near elderly would not cost tax payers any money because the participants would pay a large monthly premium.

CON: Medicare will go bankrupt early next century. The program needs to be trimmed, not expanded. Expanding Medicare is risky because it is difficult to calculate how much including a new group of beneficiaries will cost, particularly when the baby boomers become eligible. Offering the "near elderly" Medicare coverage will encourage more Americans to retire early, therefore placing an added burden on the Social Security system.

The FDA's drug approval process should be reformed.

PRO: People with AIDS, cancer, and other life-threatening diseases need timely access to new, innovative drug treatments. Many are suffering during the time it takes the FDA to approve new drug therapies. Pharmaceutical companies have already tested products before they bring them to the FDA. If the FDA wants to further test drugs, they should use outside researchers to speed up the process.

CON: Putting new drugs on the market without carefully testing them poses a great threat to public health. The FDA must prove to its satisfaction that drugs are safe and effective before approving them for patient use. Outside researchers cannot be relied upon because pharmaceutical companies could influence them. Lastly, the FDA has already made progress in shortening the amount of time it takes to approve new drugs.

IMMIGRATION

The United States was built by immigrants, many seeking a new life in a new land. Before 1882, anyone could move to the United States. But as the population grew, the federal government decided to control immigration. The first immigration laws limited the number of newcomers from countries such as China and Japan so that the ethnic makeup of the United States would be preserved. In 1965, the government limited not only the number of immigrants from Europe, Asia, and Africa, but also, for the first time, immigrants from countries in the Western Hemisphere. In 1997, the United States admitted approximately 800,000 legal immigrants. However, immigration swelled by another 275,000 people who illegally crossed U.S. borders.

Unlike previous waves of immigrants who dispersed more evenly throughout the country, the newcomers of the last thirty years have settled primarily in certain regions. In areas like the American Southwest, California, and Florida, recent immigrants—many of them Hispanic—reside in greater percentages than in other places. As a result, some Americans perceive the country as being overwhelmed by immigrants and have asked policymakers to create new laws that discourage immigration.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States increase the number of work visas for highly skilled immigrants?
- Should the United States adopt English as its official language?
- Should the government deny social services to illegal immigrants?

In 1996, Washington lawmakers passed three new laws that have changed immigration control and immigrants' rights in the United States. The controversy surrounding this legislation made immigration one of the most divisive public policy issues of the 1990s. Recently, the growing influence of a new bloc of voters—newly naturalized immigrants—has caused some elected officials to reconsider their positions on immigration, ensuring that the debate over immigration policy will continue well into the new century.

BACKGROUND

U.S. Immigration Policy

Unlimited Immigration. The United States was founded and settled by immigrants. At first, the country was open to anyone, although most came from western and northern Europe. Many came to America to escape war, poverty, famine, or religious persecution. Others were seeking their fortune in a land where the streets were said to be paved with gold—a myth spread in Europe by some steamship companies seeking passengers. And many were brought against their will to work as slaves. These and other factors resulted in a large-scale influx of immigrants to the United States from around the world.

Quotas. The first immigration laws were aimed at nonwhites. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act suspended immigration from China for sixty years. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt negotiated an informal "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan, under which the United States promised to desegregate

National Archives

From 1880 to 1920, more than 23 million immigrants—most of them from southern and eastern Europe—came to the United States seeking a new life. In 1910, the United States had its highest portion of foreign-born people—14.7 percent. Here, a family from Italy arrives at Ellis Island in New York Harbor in the early twentieth century.

California schools, which had separated Japanese students from others. In return, the Japanese government promised to stop the emigration of its citizens. By 1900, however, Americans were complaining about European immigration as well.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe crowded into U.S. cities, fleeing famine, religious persecution, and poor economic conditions. The growing industrial sector welcomed this large influx of inexpensive labor, but some Americans viewed the newcomers as a threat to the rising standard of living because immigrants would work long hours for little pay. In addition, an anticommunist mood after World War I made some U.S. citizens suspicious of anyone who seemed "foreign." Many believed that these new immigrants were racially and culturally inferior to people of northern and western European descent who had come to America earlier. Some thought that the most recent European immigrants would be less able to learn English and be assimilated, or absorbed, into American culture. As a result, many U.S. citizens called for limits on further immigration.

Early immigration laws aimed to preserve the racial, religious, and ethnic composition of the United States at the time. Responding to concerns that too many people were fleeing a war-ravaged Europe after World War I, Congress passed a law in 1921 that limited immigration to 3 percent of the number of nationals living in the United States as of 1910. This law tried to encourage immigration from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, and Scandinavia because natives of these lands seemed more likely to assimilate. Meanwhile, the law discouraged immigration from eastern and southern European countries such as Italy and Poland, whose citizens were considered to be of inferior heritage.

A new immigration law, passed in 1924, set even tighter quotas on people of "less desirable" heritage. By 1929, federal laws limited the number of immigrants to just over 150,000 per year based on the national origins of the American population in 1920.

Of the annual quota, 70 percent were to come from Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, and the Scandinavian countries; the remaining 30 percent were limited to countries in southern and eastern Europe. Immigration from Asia was banned altogether.

McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. In 1952, Congress passed the controversial McCarran-Walter Act. Generally, the law reiterated the quota system, with certain countries receiving as few as 100 immigration "slots" each year. However, people from the Asia-Pacific region would now be allowed to immigrate to the United States. Furthermore, in response to anti-communist sentiments of the time, McCarran-Walter added ideology to nationality as a criteria for admission to the United States.

However, in 1990, Congress made it illegal for the U.S. government to deny anyone entry into the country on the basis of beliefs, statements, or associations. Nevertheless, the secretary of state can still exclude people for ideological reasons if the government has a "compelling" foreign policy interest in keeping them out. For example, terrorists and others who threaten national security can be denied entry.

CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To become a citizen of the United States, a person must be legally admitted to the country for permanent residence and must satisfy several requirements. One requirement is knowledge of U.S. history and government. Following are sample questions from the citizenship test.

- Who is the chief justice of the Supreme Court?
- Which countries were our principal allies during World War II?
- What is the Bill of Rights?
- Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death?"

Immigration Act of 1965. The 1965 Immigration Act represented a major reform of all previous immigration laws. It abolished quotas that discriminated against nationalities, substituting an overall limit of 170,000 immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere. But the 1965 act also limited immigration from Western Hemisphere countries for the first time to 120,000 annually. This law touched off a serious illegal immigrant problem. For Latin Americans, the United States had long been a haven from the poverty and civil wars of their homelands. Before 1965, thousands of jobs requiring low-wage labor had been filled by Mexicans and Central Americans who needed only to apply for temporary or permanent visas to be admitted legally.

Immigration quotas still allow some Latin Americans to enter the United States legally. But since the 1965 limitations were put in place, many have come illegally, working in low-paying, unskilled jobs such as harvesting crops or cleaning office and apartment buildings.

Some say that Americans exploit illegal immigrants. Because they lack legal status, illegal residents of the United States are often paid salaries below minimum wage. Yet historically they have been reluctant to complain about low wages or harsh working conditions because of fear of dismissal or deportation. Still, many hardworking illegal immigrants have prospered in the United States, earning much more than they could in their homelands.

PROTECTED A WHILE LONGER

In a show of humanitarian support for the countries hardest hit by Hurricane Mitch—which killed thousands of Central Americans in October 1998—the Clinton administration offered Temporary Protected Status to Honduran and Nicaraguan citizens who were living in the United States prior to December 30, 1998. During the eighteen-month designation period, eligible Hondurans and Nicaraguans—who may be in the country illegally—will not be subject to removal and will be eligible for permission to work in the United States. According to the INS, the designation applies to approximately 90,000 Hondurans and 60,000 Nicaraguans.

Refugee Act of 1980. Before 1980, only a special act of Congress could admit groups of refugees—most often people fleeing communism. For example, in 1976, Congress passed special laws to admit 565,000 refugees who fled Southeast Asia after South Vietnam came under communist control. However, in 1980, lawmakers made a major change in immigration policy by passing the Refugee Act.

The Refugee Act of 1980 legally defined a refugee as someone who flees a country because of persecution "on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion." The act authorizes the president, in consultation with Congress, to establish an annual ceiling on the number of refugees who may enter the United States. The act also allows the president to admit any group of refugees in an emergency.

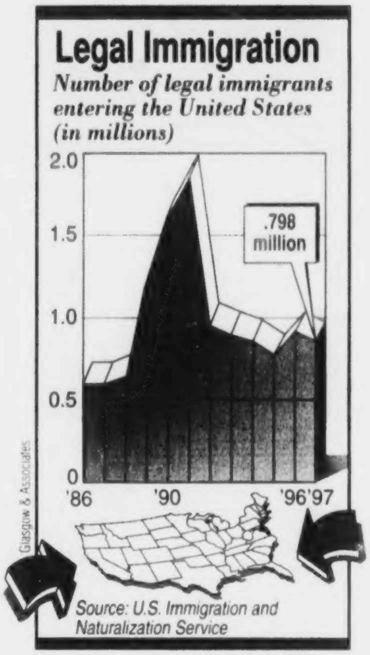
Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 was designed to stop the flow of illegal immigration from Latin America by imposing sanctions against U.S. employers who hire illegal immigrants. At the same time, the law gave illegal residents who had been living in the United States since 1982 the opportunity to become legal citizens.

Immigration Act of 1990. The Immigration Act of 1990 increased the number of immigrants legally allowed to enter the United States by nearly 30 percent. According to the most recent statistics from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the United States admitted 798,378 legal immigrants in fiscal year 1997. The 1990 law also increased the number of visas for skilled immigrants, such as engineers and scientists.

Immigration Today

Changing Demographics. In addition to the more than 790,000 legal immigrants to whom the United States opened its doors in 1997, an estimated 275,000 immigrants arrived illegally. Overall, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) estimates that about 5 million illegal immigrants currently reside in the United States, of which 54 percent are of Mexican origin. The majority of these residents are called EWIs, meaning they "entered without inspection." Such immigrants often come into the country between official border crossings. Approximately 40 percent of the illegal alien population are "nonimmigrant overstays"—people who arrived legally but overstayed their visas.

The presence of large numbers of both legal and illegal immigrants has contributed to dramatic changes in the racial, ethnic, and cultural composition of the United States. In 1998, the Census Bureau



Americans disagree on the number of immigrants that should be allowed to enter the United States.

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estimated that almost one in ten U.S. residents is foreign-born—the greatest proportion since the 1930s. And this group is growing at a rate four times faster than the country's population as a whole.

These numbers will have a profound effect on the demographic makeup of the country over the next fifty years. Currently, whites account for 74 percent of the population; blacks, 12 percent; Hispanics, 10 percent; and Asians, 3 percent. But some estimates predict that by 2050, the number of residents with Hispanic heritage will represent a quarter of the population. Some experts believe that by as early as 2010, whites will no longer be the majority in California and that similar demographic shifts in New York, Texas, Maryland, and New Jersey will soon follow.

Attitudes About Immigration. Many Americans believe that their country cannot absorb more immigrants. They contend that newcomers take jobs away from Americans—particularly low-skilled workers—because they enlarge the labor pool and are willing to work for lower wages. In addition, advocates of immigration restrictions point to the large cost to taxpayers for health and education benefits for illegal immigrants.

Critics of restrictions argue that immigrants are important to the country. They turn around the job argument, asserting that immigrants accept low-skill, low-wage jobs that many native-born Americans will not. Moreover, these critics say, immigrants come to the United States with a diligent work ethic that increases the country's productivity and helps the economy. They also point out an undercurrent of racism in the restriction proposals.

Proposition 187. About 40 percent of all illegal immigrants in the United States live in California, affecting the state's budget and straining the tolerance of its legal residents. Generally, illegal immigrants are not eligible for welfare grants such as unemployment or Social Security. However, children and parents in need are entitled to some services. Officials in California say that supporting that population costs the state $3 billion annually.

In November 1994, voters in California approved the "Save Our State" amendment, better known as Proposition 187. That law denied illegal aliens all public social services, public nonemergency health care based on financial need, and public education. Proposition 187 was immediately challenged in court by civil rights and immigrant advocacy groups. In March 1998, a federal district court judge ruled most of the law unconstitutional. The state is appealing the case, and proponents of Proposition 187 hope the U.S. Supreme Court will eventually rule it constitutional.

Recent Federal Legislation. Heated criticism of U.S. immigration policy has resulted in new laws at the federal level as well. In 1996, Congress passed, and President Clinton signed into law, three controversial bills with implications for both legal and illegal immigrants.

1996 Anti-Terrorism Act. One provision in the Anti-Terrorism Act hastened the procedures for deporting immigrants with criminal records. It also expanded the number of crimes punishable by detention and deportation. In fiscal year 1997, the Immigration and Naturalization Service deported about 50,000 aliens convicted of crimes, a major increase over previous years. However, officials point out that many deportees illegally return to the United States.

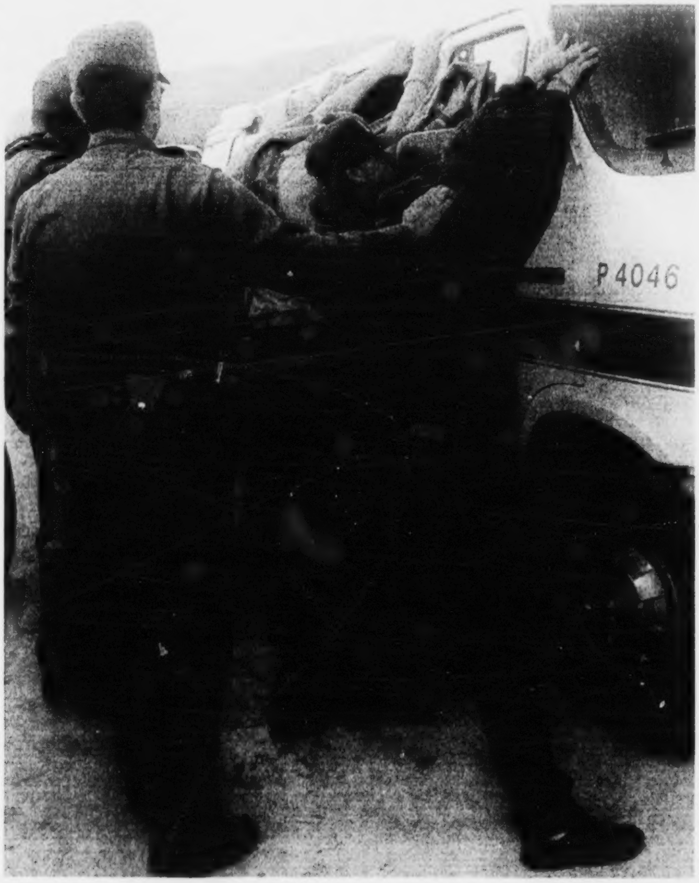
Welfare Overhaul. In August 1996, President Clinton signed a sweeping new welfare reform bill. This legislation made illegal immigrants ineligible for virtually all federal and state benefits except emergency medical care, immunization programs, and disaster relief. It also denied legal immigrants food stamps and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)—a program for older, blind, and disabled people.

DETAINING IMMIGRANTS

Trying to carry out tough detention and deportation laws passed in 1996, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is struggling to find places to hold noncitizen, legal residents who are scheduled for deportation because of criminal records. A piece of the complex immigration reform bills of 1996 calls for the INS to deport legal aliens with certain types of criminal convictions, even if they have already served out their punishments. Some of these detainees, known as "lifers," are stuck in an indefinite detention status because their own countries either will not accept them or do not have deportation relationships with the United States, such as Cuba. Immigrant advocates argue that this indefinite detention constitutes cruel and unusual punishment.

Controversy erupted in 1997 as many of these provisions went into effect. In response, Congress amended the law, dropping the provision that denied SSI benefits for legal aliens. Since then, other benefits have been restored to legal immigrants. Meanwhile, many local government officials protested new mandates calling on them to determine a welfare recipient's immigration status and report illegal immigrants to the INS.

1996 Immigration Act. The complex Immigration Act of 1996 is the most extensive immigration legislation passed by Congress in a decade. The new law doubled the border patrol force to 10,000 agents over five years and added fences in the most heavily trafficked areas of the U.S.-Mexican border. Like the welfare reform law, provisions of the 1996 Immigration Act stirred controversy. For example, the law granted



The number of border patrol agents in the Southwest increased from 4,000 in 1993 to 7,000 in 1997. Shown here are Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents arresting illegal immigrants near San Diego, California.

INS Photo by Bill Powers

sweeping powers to immigration agents, allowing them to make on-the-spot expulsions of noncitizens. Many legal experts challenged those powers on the grounds that immigrants are entitled to hearings.

A New Tolerance? Though the late 1980s and mid-1990s saw a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States, more moderate attitudes have recently prevailed. A greater number of elected officials have begun to pay attention to immigrant concerns—particularly those in states with high Hispanic populations—as newly naturalized voters begin to make a difference at the polls.

CURRENT ISSUES

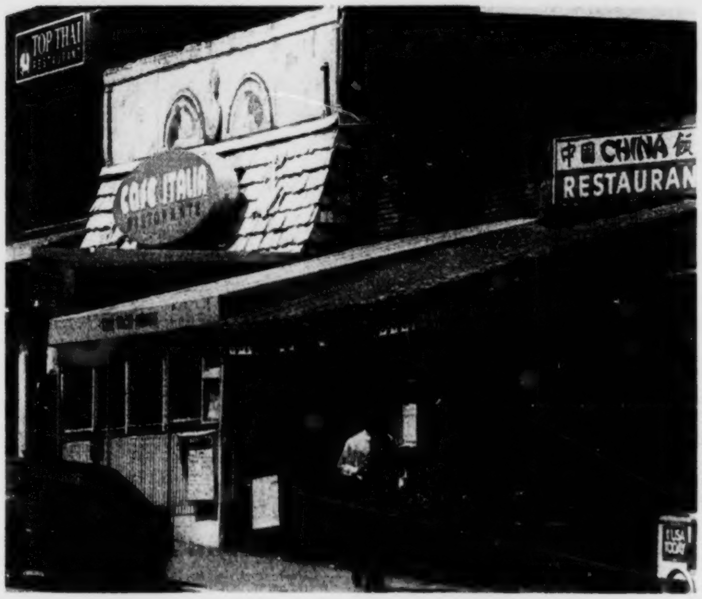
Immigrants and the Economy. According to the Commerce Department, the United States will need 1 million new information-technology employees over the next decade. Already, more than 300,000 job vacancies exist in this field. The United States currently limits the number of highly skilled workers who can enter the country on special work visas. Some have argued that this number should be raised.

Those who support raising the number of employment-based visas—which allow immigrants with skills and talents needed by American companies to work in the United States—believe that highly skilled legal immigrants help the economy. Many members of the business community say that they cannot find enough multilingual and technically trained American workers to help keep the nation competitive in the global economy. Therefore, American companies recruit highly educated and trained immigrants to fill this void. They argue that these legal residents have provided U.S. firms with specialized job skills and thereby have helped these industries grow.

On the other hand, opponents say that American jobs are being lost to foreigners. They argue that foreign workers are not necessarily better skilled than

American candidates but are willing to accept less pay and are less likely to challenge poor working conditions because they depend on their sponsor company for their legal right to remain in the United States. These critics argue that easing the ability of American companies to "import" employees depresses industry wages. And some say that increasing the number of work visas will contribute to the already high immigrant population in this country, draining resources and degrading the quality of life for all.

English Only? As the number of immigrants from Latin America and Asia has increased, many Americans have felt the presence of another culture—and another language—in their community. Although many citizens appreciate the vitality and diversity that new cultures bring, some believe the nation's own identity is threatened. These Americans think that a common language binds people together in a society. They fear that a bilingual society might splinter the country along cultural and racial lines. Responding to these concerns, some members of Congress advocate that the United States make English its official language.



Growing numbers of immigrants from Latin American, Asian, and African countries have contributed to an increasingly diverse American food scene. This street, in an Arlington, Virginia, neighborhood, is home to restaurants representing cuisine from more than ten countries.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Supporters of adopting English as the official U.S. language believe that English unifies the nation, and that non-English-speaking immigrants are isolated because they cannot communicate with most Americans. Making English the official language would encourage immigrants to learn it. Many people, including some recent immigrants, think that the government wastes taxpayers' money by printing tax forms, ballots, laws, and court proceedings in other languages. Some English-only proponents believe that the U.S. government should focus on teaching English to immigrants so they can find jobs and assimilate into American society. Otherwise, they caution, immigrants may not be able to find worthwhile jobs and will be forced to rely on expensive government social service programs.

Other American men and women believe that making English the official language of the United States would fundamentally exclude some people from voting, understanding U.S. laws, or participating in America's judicial system. These opponents of the English-only movement argue that the movement is fueled by racism and a fear of immigrants, not by economic reasons. Critics point out that not only have immigrants assimilated into the United States throughout its history without being obligated to speak English, but they have made many social, political, and economic contributions to U.S. society along the way. Finally, they argue that forcing one language on Americans is a violation of free speech rights, protected by the First Amendment.

Denying Benefits to Illegal Immigrants. Though new laws have been passed since California's Proposition 187, the debate over the rights of immigrants to receive social benefits continues. Many taxpayers in states with large numbers of illegal immigrants express outrage at the spiraling cost of social programs. Many Americans believe that the government, by providing free services to undocumented immigrants, is unintentionally encouraging people to enter the United States illegally. People who want to deny social services to illegal immigrants argue that would-be illegal aliens would think twice before crossing the border once they realized that they would not get free medical care and education in the United States.

Although most Americans agree that illegal immigration is a problem, many oppose denying social services to undocumented residents and their children. They think such laws will not discourage illegal immigration because foreigners come to the United States primarily to work, not to collect social benefits. Opponents point to studies indicating that illegal immigrants rely on social benefits in the same proportions as other Americans. They argue that preventing immigrants from receiving medical care and education services will result in an unhealthy, poorly educated underclass. Many critics believe that the government should instead focus its anti-illegal immigration policies on controlling the U.S.-Mexican border.

OUTLOOK

As more and more people of different races and cultures enter the United States and the racial composition of the country changes, debates about immigration become more intense. Some U.S. citizens favor tighter immigration restrictions and argue that immigrants take jobs away from Americans, resist learning English, and drain social services. Others, however, point to America's historical commitment to immigration and believe that immigrants keep the nation economically competitive and culturally rich. The question of whether to close America's doors will continue to be debated in the courts, in Congress, and in communities where immigrants choose to settle.

THE DEBATE: IMMIGRATION

The United States should increase the number of work visas for highly skilled immigrants.

PRO: The United States will need more than 1 million new information-technology employees over the next decade to stay competitive in the global market. Currently, there are not enough qualified American workers to fill these positions. Highly skilled foreign workers help the U.S. economy by meeting the demand for high-tech labor. Allowing more such workers into the country will help ensure continued economic growth.

CON: American jobs are being lost to foreign workers. These immigrant laborers are not necessarily better-skilled than American workers, just more willing to accept lower wages and poor working conditions. Allowing U.S. companies to increase the number of such immigrants will depress industry wages. Besides, allowing additional immigrants into this country will continue to drain already limited resources.

The United States should adopt English as its official language.

PRO: A common language unifies a country. Adopting English as the official U.S. language helps immigrants assimilate quickly. Furthermore, success in the United States requires proficiency in English. Otherwise, immigrants risk self-segregation, reduced job prospects, and reliance on costly social services. Besides, making English the official language would not bar people from speaking their native language in many settings.

CON: Establishing English as the official language would send a signal to immigrants that their culture and heritage are not welcome in the United States. Immigrants from diverse backgrounds give the United States many economic, social, and political strengths. Printing all government forms in English would make it harder for many immigrants to participate in democracy. Racism and fear drive the English-only movement.

The government should deny social services to illegal immigrants.

PRO: Many people enter the United States illegally because they know they will receive free medical care and education. Immigrants' demands for social services place an unfair burden on U.S. taxpayers. The government should not encourage the entry of people who drain social services and take jobs away from American citizens. By denying benefits, the government would remove these incentives and reduce illegal immigration.

CON: People come to the United States to work, not to sap public benefits. Besides, taking away services from illegal immigrants would create an underclass of uneducated and unhealthy people. Educating the children of illegal immigrants will help turn them into productive Americans. The burden placed on states by undocumented immigrants has been exaggerated by people who are motivated more by racism than by fiscal concerns.

THE MEDIA

Freedom of the press is an essential part of democracy. Newspapers, television news programs, and radio talk shows have the important role of keeping citizens informed about domestic and world events. Thus, the news media have been called the watchdogs of democracy because journalists are expected to keep an eye on the government for the people. The ability of journalists to write and broadcast without fear of government censorship is a cornerstone of freedom in America.

In 1963, Philip Graham, then publisher of *The Washington Post*, said, "Journalism is the first rough draft of history." For example, in the 1800s, U.S. newspaper editors focused attention on the horrors of slavery. In the 1940s, Americans commonly followed the course of World War II by listening to the radio. Several decades later, television reporters brought grisly images of the Vietnam War into America's living rooms. In 1969, 500 million people witnessed, via radio and television, the first man walking on the moon. Two journalists uncovered the Watergate crimes in 1972 and 1973 that toppled Richard Nixon's presidency.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Have the "new media" helped citizens become more informed?
- Are journalistic ethics declining?
- Should television stations give free airtime to political candidates?

The 1990s have witnessed the emergence of new technologies that have revolutionized how the news is gathered and consumed. Many Americans now rely on the Internet for news. But what will be the effect of these new information technologies? Some experts think that the government will be more responsive to the people as news and opinions are exchanged faster. Others argue that recent trends in the media—particularly the blurring between news and entertainment—may do more harm than good to the democratic process.

BACKGROUND

Shaping the First Amendment

Early Challenges to a Free Press. Before the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791, freedom of speech and freedom of the press were not protected by law. In fact, before the Revolutionary War, the British government tightly controlled newspapers in the American colonies. Criticism of the monarchy was a crime punishable by death. In 1735, John Peter Zenger, publisher of the *New York Weekly Journal*, was accused of "seditious libel"—speaking out against the government—for printing articles critical of an English governor. Although freedom of the press was not yet legally guaranteed, Zenger's attorney argued that "speaking and writing truth" was a valid defense. An American jury acquitted Zenger.

Thomas Jefferson, a vocal proponent of freedom of the press, once said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." However, even after the adoption of the Constitution, the American government enacted sedition laws in 1798 and

Reuters/Jim Bourg/Archive Photos

Journalists compete to get firsthand information for a story and to break the story before others do. Some media experts think that the pressure to report events even faster has led to incorrect news stories. Others argue that the majority of reports in the newspaper and on television are fair and accurate.

1918. Under these laws, writings that criticized the United States, Congress, or the president were criminal acts, and some Americans were punished for exercising their right to freedom of the press. These laws eventually expired.

The First Amendment. At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, some delegates argued that the people needed a bill of rights that listed individual freedoms and placed limitations on government power. Many state leaders also wanted to make sure that people would be free from tyranny in the new nation. With the states' approval and ratification, the Bill of Rights became part of the Constitution in 1791. Among other rights, the First Amendment guarantees people's right to freedom of speech and the press:

> *Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press. . . .*

The First Amendment established the press's right to criticize the government and political leaders, as well as the right to report on controversial topics, without fear of punishment.

Freedom of the Press and National Security. Wars and other events that have national security implications for the United States test the boundaries of the First Amendment. In times of war, the government has often placed limitations on the press, arguing that making public certain details—such as military strategies—might risk both American lives and national security. Others, however, believe that it is unconstitutional to suspend First Amendment rights, even during emergencies.

The Vietnam War. During the Vietnam War in the 1960s and early 1970s, journalists had wide access to military operations and covered many battles. Reporters accompanied U.S. soldiers on "search and destroy" missions and broadcast other scenes from the war for viewers to watch on television. The images of villages

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND STUDENT NEWSPAPERS

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that students have First Amendment rights. However, the Court has also said that high school newspapers do not enjoy the same freedom of the press as professional newspapers. In *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988), the Court held that teachers and principals can exercise editorial control over school-sponsored publications. Some people argue that this ruling allows government censorship, but others believe that, because schools own and operate student newspapers, school officials are more like editors at professional newspapers.

burning and American soldiers dying became firmly entrenched in the public's mind. By the late 1960s, many citizens had begun to question their nation's role in Vietnam—a skepticism believed to have been generated in large part by the media's coverage of the war.

The Pentagon Papers. Controversies about the influence of the press on the Vietnam War continued into the 1970s. In 1971, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* published top-secret documents, obtained by a former Defense Department employee, detailing government actions during the war. The newspapers printed excerpts of the documents, which soon became known as the "Pentagon Papers." President Richard Nixon obtained a court order preventing any further publication, arguing that such action was a national security risk. This was the first time in American history that the federal government had censored a work that was to be published in its entirety.

However, the *Post* and the *Times* appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. In *New York Times v. United States* (1971), the Court ruled that the government had not proven that publishing the Pentagon Papers would jeopardize national security and overturned the order, allowing publication to resume.

The Persian Gulf War. Twenty years later, in 1991, the U.S. government cited national security as the reason for restricting news media coverage of the

Persian Gulf War in Iraq. The Pentagon regulated the movements of journalists by giving only the "press pool"—a small group of reporters—limited access to military operations and other information. The pool reporters were always accompanied by military personnel and were supposed to share their findings with those left behind. In addition, ten categories of information were deemed "not releasable." Some of this information was sensitive, such as the number of troops and aircraft stationed in the Gulf, but journalists also were forbidden to disclose the names or hometowns of most soldiers they interviewed. Many constitutional scholars believe that the military is not justified in restricting the media by using press pools. Others, however, respond that the press does not have a right to full access to U.S. military information.

Television and Politics

In 1941, television broadcasting began in the United States. By 1949, there were more than 100 television stations and two regular news programs (each fifteen

John Kennedy and Richard Nixon participated in the first-ever televised debate between presidential candidates. Kennedy's performance helped him win the election.

CORBIS/UPI/Bettmann

minutes long) on NBC and CBS. By 1955, 35 million American homes had televisions. The new medium of television quickly became more powerful than radio. This fact did not escape politicians, who saw television as a potentially powerful weapon in their election campaigns.

Television and Presidential Elections. Television's role in choosing the president has been particularly significant. Some critics contend that television reporting on presidential campaigns has led to an emphasis on style over substance. Others argue that television coverage has better informed people about the issues.

The Kennedy/Nixon Debate. The 1960 presidential election was the closest in history; Senator John Kennedy defeated Vice President Richard Nixon by fewer than 100,000 votes of the 70 million cast. Although historians disagree over what gave Kennedy his razor-thin margin of victory, few can doubt the significance of the televised debate. On September 16, 1960, Kennedy and Nixon met in a studio in Chicago for the first-ever presidential debate to be broadcast on television. That night, more than 70 million Americans watched the two candidates discuss their opinions on foreign and domestic policy. On camera, Kennedy looked youthful and well rested. Nixon, however, was recovering from an illness and seemed tired and haggard. Afterwards, public opinion polls of television viewers declared Kennedy the "winner"; those who had listened on the radio, however, thought that Nixon came out ahead. After the election, Kennedy told a friend, "It was TV that turned the tide."

Bill Clinton on MTV. In 1992, Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas appeared on a series of television programs that were atypical for presidential candidates. Facing accusations about his personal life, Clinton was questioned about his marriage in a special thirteen-minute interview on *60 Minutes* following the 1992 Super Bowl. Later in the campaign, he donned a pair of sunglasses and played the saxophone on the Arsenio Hall Show in an attempt to appeal to wider audiences.

He also went on MTV to take questions from young citizens. Most political analysts agree that Clinton's television appearances improved his image with the American public and helped him win the presidency.

NEWS SOURCES

What kind of news Americans consume depends in large part on their source for news. According to a 1997 study that analyzed news media coverage by story type, television newsmagazines devote about 3 percent of their airtime to covering the government, foreign affairs, and military, and more than 18 percent to celebrity entertainment and lifestyles stories. Network news programs offer stories about the government and foreign affairs about 30 percent of the time, while newspapers allocate 45 percent of their coverage to such stories.

The Influence of the "New Media"

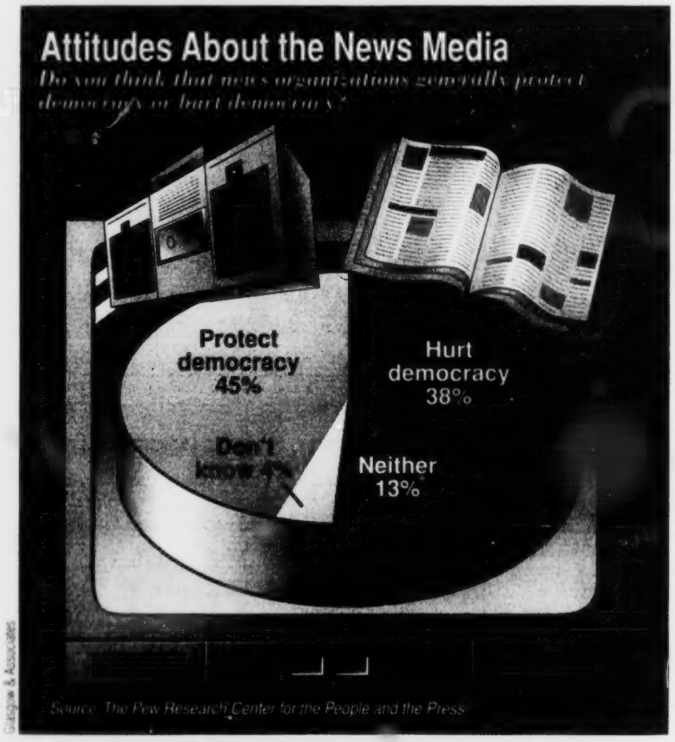
Over the course of the twentieth century, radio and television have had a tremendous impact on the dissemination of news and information. Recent advances in technology have created innovative ways of transmitting news. Experts have dubbed these telecommunications technologies—cable television, interactive television, electronic mail, and the Internet—the "new media."

News Everywhere. In 1980, the Cable News Network (CNN) became the first twenty-four-hour television news channel. CNN helped further the notion of a global village, where people in different countries could witness events around the world "live" on television and communicate instantly via electronic mail or facsimile. Since 1996, two more twenty-four-hour cable news channels, MSNBC and the FOX News Network, have gone on the air.

Newspapers and radio programs have changed as well, offering the public information in new formats. For example, since 1982 the newspaper *USA Today* has offered readers "news at a glance" in an easy-to-read, colorful format. Many news consumers also rely on talk radio personalities such as Rush Limbaugh and Don Imus to offer opinions and information about current events.

The Internet. The Internet has become a major news source for many Americans. In recent years, news organizations and technology companies have raced to put information on the Internet—material available almost instantly to millions of "plugged in" computer users. Internet users can "surf" different Web sites in which newspaper articles, important speeches, interviews, and key pieces of legislation can be accessed. Currently, about 40 million people around the world get news from the Internet.

Public Trust of the Media. Today, the public can choose from an abundance of media sources. However, many people question whether much of what they are reading, hearing, and seeing is reliable. They worry that reporters are not using credible sources or checking their facts. Some think that news conglomerates—companies that own more than one newspaper, magazine, or television station—are more concerned about generating profits than providing legitimate, accurate news coverage. Some experts are apprehensive about the media's preoccupation with sensationalist topics. They argue that over the last few years, the press has become obsessed with stories such as the death of Princess Diana, the O. J. Simpson murder trial, and the scandals surrounding President Clinton—all at the expense of hard news. Critics claim that mainstream newspapers are becoming more like supermarket tabloids and that, as a result, the public is not being kept informed about events and issues that really make a difference in their lives. Overall, the news media appears to have lost much of the trust they once had from the American public.



According to some opinion polls, many Americans are concerned about the quality of the news media.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Some observers believe that one way to address cynicism about the press would be to create a national news council, composed of journalists, to monitor the coverage of people and events. However, others say that criticism of the press is overblown. They contend that journalists are generally committed professionals who provide a valuable public service. Besides, media watchers point out, readers and viewers publicly denounce certain media coverage yet privately consume it, thus keeping ratings and profits high. These critics say that the American people have to learn to separate the "real" from the "sensational."

CURRENT ISSUES

The New Media and an Informed Public. While new information technologies—especially the Internet and cable television—have made it possible for news consumers to get news on demand, they have also increased the possibility for misinformation. Some experts think that the new media have contributed to an increased focus on scandal coverage and a loosening of important journalistic standards. Others argue that the Internet provides an open forum for discussing ideas and debating policy, which ultimately strengthens democratic institutions.

Critics of the new media believe that the tremendous amount of information now available twenty-four hours a day has left citizens overwhelmed by choices and underwhelmed by content. They argue that the average citizen lacks the media savvy necessary to discriminate between fact and fiction when it is all reported in the same fashion. On-line journalism in particular has sped up the news cycle and created a demand for constant updates, at the expense of accurate reporting and thoughtful analysis. Many Americans are concerned that Internet reporters rely on rumor instead of fact and that reputable news organizations, eager to keep up, are running stories they have not yet verified.

While most concede that the new media have some drawbacks, many Americans believe that these

MSNBC
News Alert
Internet Explorer 4

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Some people rely on the Internet as their primary source for news, weather, and business information. Most major newspapers and television networks have Internet sites that are updated continuously throughout the day.

advanced technologies are helping to keep people better informed. Some argue that most practitioners of the new journalism know that their reputations will be made on the accuracy of their information; thus, they need to be just as careful as traditional journalists. These proponents claim that the twenty-four-hour news channels help educate voters and give them greater access to their elected leaders and that the Internet has created a forum for citizens' voices to be heard. Consequently, supporters of the new media say, government officials are becoming more responsive to the needs of the people.

Journalistic Ethics. In late 1998 and 1999, the American media were rocked by a series of high-profile cases involving editors and writers who invented sources, plagiarized the works of others, and used questionable investigative techniques to seek out and confirm stories. The respected CBS newsmagazine *60 Minutes* created a furor when it aired a videotape of Dr. Jack Kevorkian—an outspoken advocate of legalizing doctor-assisted suicide—administering a lethal dose of drugs to a terminally ill patient. Two major news outlets—*Time* magazine and CNN—had to retract a story they reported about the Pentagon's alleged killings of American defectors in Vietnam in 1970. Such incidents, coupled with the intense

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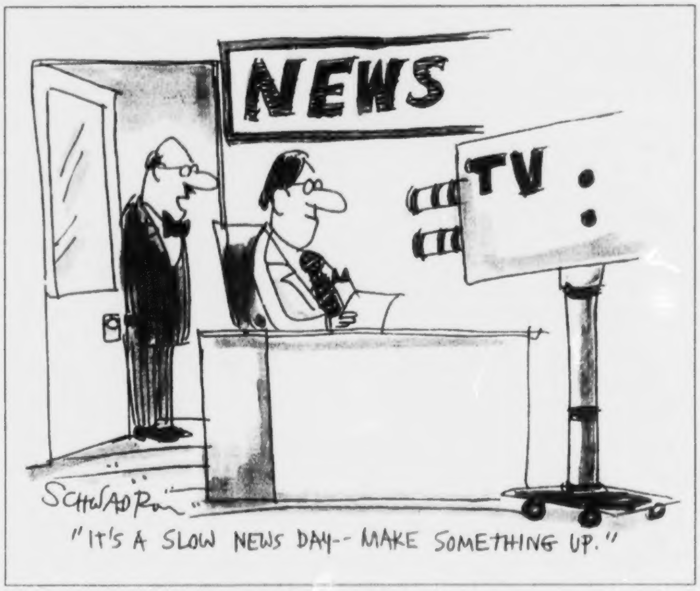


"IT'S A SLOW NEWS DAY-- MAKE SOMETHING UP."

Harley Schwadron

coverage of the scandal surrounding President Bill Clinton's impeachment, have brought the public's mistrust of the media to new heights.

Many people, both inside and outside the mainstream media, say that journalistic ethics are headed downwards. The notion of journalists as sources of uncensored, truthful information for the electorate has long been considered one of the pillars of American democracy. Now, people question whether a combination of factors—including increasing competition for viewers and readers; corporate ownership of the media; and the rapidly blurring line between information and entertainment—have caused irreparable damage to journalism.

Those who believe that journalistic ethics are in decline argue that the basic tenets of good journalism—multiple sources; fair, nonbiased reporting; and a focus on government, public policy, and politics—have been replaced by an overabundance of editorializing, too much scandal coverage, and the "dumbing down" of news content. These critics also maintain that because most major media outlets are now owned by corporate stockholders out to make a profit, the sacred line between the editorial department and the marketing department has been lost. Thus, profit motivation, instead of the public interest, drives decisionmaking. Finally, these critics say that growing competition among news sources has caused a "rush to press" and a loss of filtering devices and editorial processes that have historically ensured the accuracy and relevance of the coverage.

On the other hand, many media critics point out that scandal has always been a part of journalism. In fact, they contend that fairness and accuracy levels were once much worse when newspapers were controlled by political parties and readers simply subscribed to the paper whose ideology they agreed with. These experts disagree with claims that journalists have lowered their standards and instead suggest greater scrutiny of the media by the public. Some in the field think that journalistic practices are actually more scrupulous today than in decades past because reporters are more aware of the public's skepticism. Finally, many others point to the fact that news organizations have continued to prove their credibility by uncovering corporate wrongdoing, even though they may be owned by giant media corporations themselves.

Free Airtime for Candidates. Political campaigns for Congress and the presidency are expensive. Some Senate races, for example, cost as much as $50 million. During the 1996 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton and Bob Dole each spent more than $100 million. A major reason for the huge cost is the expense of television airtime. If candidates have a lot of money at their disposal, they can buy television commercials and get their message out to more people. Candidates with little name recognition and limited funds, however, cannot compete effectively because they are unable to buy time on the airwaves. The end result, experts say, is that voters are not given a real choice on election day.

To level the playing field, many political leaders and journalists are trying to convince television stations to offer free airtime to candidates. One proposal is to give candidates two to five minutes each night during prime time starting a month before the election.

Candidates would be able to address the people directly, without journalists asking questions.

Proponents of free airtime think that giving candidates more direct access to voters would benefit the political process. Some experts say that free airtime would help candidates with less money get their message to more voters. They also argue that viewers would be more engaged in the election if candidates could address them with prepared, uninterrupted speeches. Some think that this forum would encourage candidates to offer thoughtful commentary on the issues rather than sound bites and attacks on their opponents.

Critics, on the other hand, argue that there are already many media sources that voters can use to educate themselves about the candidates and the issues. Some point out that giving free airtime is unnecessary because many television stations and networks already offer public-affairs shows on which candidates participate. Critics also warn that candidates might use free airtime to attack their opponents rather than discuss issues. Others contend that it is a citizen's responsibility to be proactive in researching the issues and the candidates.

OUTLOOK

Because of the tremendous power it wields, the press has often been called the "fourth branch" of government. By choosing which issues to cover and how to cover them, the media can influence whether a bill is passed, if U.S. troops go to war, and which presidential candidate is elected. Some argue that news media have too much power and often use it irresponsibly. Others respond that the press promotes democracy by keeping citizens informed, searching for the truth, and exposing corruption and scandals. As new technologies revolutionize information sharing, many people believe that citizens are gaining a greater voice in government and that the news media's role as the watchdog of democracy is growing.

THE DEBATE: THE MEDIA

The "new media" have helped citizens become more informed.

PRO: The "new media" have helped provide people with more information, which is essential for good citizenship. These journalists know they must be accurate to maintain their audience. These new technologies, particularly the Internet, provide a more democratic press in which all citizens can take part in the national debate. Thus, government becomes more responsive to citizens' needs.

CON: Too much information is now available; citizens do not know what is true and what is false. The news cycle is now so fast that reports are given without thorough fact-checking. Internet sites and cable television news offer rumor and scandal coverage, rather than accurate, nonbiased reporting. Citizens risk receiving misinformation about issues that affect their daily lives.

Journalistic ethics are declining.

PRO: Fair, nonbiased reporting has been replaced with editorializing and political punditry. Because most media outlets are now owned by huge corporations, profit—not public interest—drives decisionmaking. Too much competition among news outlets has led to quick, shoddy reporting based on rumor and not fact.

CON: Journalistic ethics have not declined; instead, scrutiny of the media has increased. Fairness and accuracy levels are actually higher than ever because journalists are aware of the public's high standards. News organizations are still committed to exposing government and media corruption and informing the public.

Television stations should give free airtime to political candidates.

PRO: Free airtime for candidates would level the playing field, making it more difficult for candidates to dominate election campaigns with money. Free airtime would also give more candidates direct access to voters and encourage meaningful discussion. This exposure could help reduce negative campaign ads and the preponderance of manipulative soundbites.

CON: People already have multiple sources of information about political candidates, including cable channels devoted entirely to coverage of politics and news. Moreover, candidates may simply use their free airtime to attack their opponents, further damaging the political process. Besides, it is a citizen's responsibility to research the issues and candidates.

POVERTY

In 1997, 35.6 million—about one in every seven Americans—lived in poverty. Although the poverty rate decreased for the third consecutive year, the problems facing the less fortunate remain a topic of debate on Capitol Hill, in state legislatures, and in neighborhoods across the country. At the center of this debate is government's responsibility to lower-income Americans. The federal government's role in assisting poor people through welfare programs like Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps, and Medicaid came under scrutiny in the 1990s. Many lawmakers and citizens argued that welfare programs were doing more harm than good. Many became convinced that federal welfare programs encouraged out-of-wedlock births and irresponsibility and discouraged self-reliance and the desire to work.

The question of how to reform welfare was at the heart of one of the most controversial legislative debates in recent years. In 1996, Congress passed a milestone welfare reform bill that ended the sixty-year-old guarantee of federal cash assistance to the poor and transferred authority over the administration of welfare to the states.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Is state-based welfare succeeding?
- Should the government increase funding for public housing?
- Should the government expand the earned income tax credit?

In the three years since the law's implementation, the number of welfare recipients has dropped. However, while some attribute this progress to the 1996 law, others question whether state and local governments are equipped to maintain a financial safety net for people during an economic downturn. Even many who supported the welfare reform bill remain unsure about its long-term results. The challenge ahead is to make sure that those former welfare recipients successfully and permanently move out of poverty and into jobs that make them economically self-sufficient.

BACKGROUND

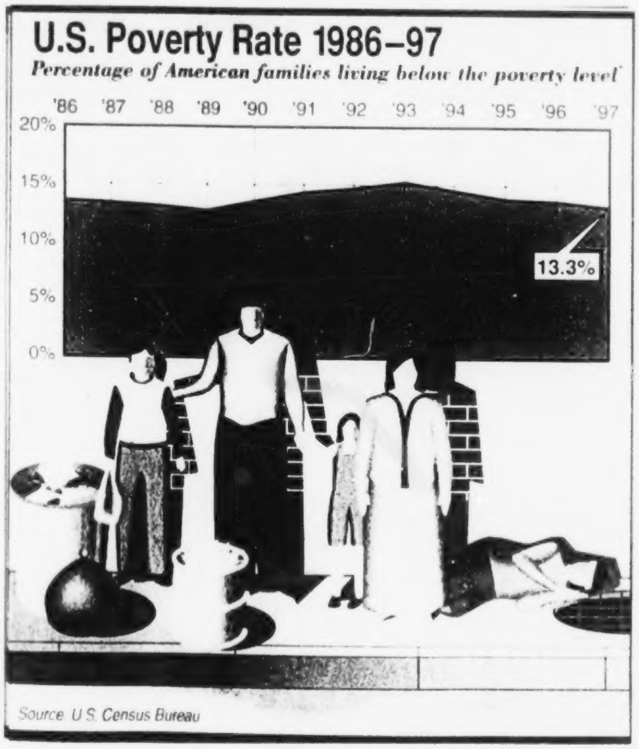
Poverty in America

In 1997, the federal government defined the poverty threshold as $16,400 for a family of four and $12,800 for a family of three. In other words, families were classified as living in poverty if their annual incomes fell below those levels. By this definition, in 1997, 35.6 million Americans—slightly more than 13 percent of the U.S. population—lived in poverty.

Poverty in America was at its worst during the Great Depression. In 1932, when the unemployment rate reached 25 percent, the population suffered widespread hardship, as millions of Americans were homeless and hungry. Since then, the country has endured numerous economic recessions, but they have usually been quite brief and have not created anything like the poverty seen during the 1930s. Although the poverty level in the United States has remained somewhat stable over the last thirty years, it is still one of the highest in the industrialized world.

Who Are the Poor?

Poverty affects certain groups more than others. The elderly, children, single mothers, and minority groups make up a disproportionate share of those in poverty. For example, in 1997, although the national



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Although it has dipped in recent years, the poverty rate in America remains one of the highest in the industrialized world.

poverty rate was 13.3 percent, the poverty rate for African Americans was 26.5 percent, 27.1 percent for Latinos, and 20 percent for children. Children comprise 40 percent of the poor yet only 26 percent of the total population. They have become, in the words of one expert, "the face of poverty."

What Causes Poverty? Americans disagree on the causes of poverty. While most believe that the lack of educational opportunity is a major reason, some also contend that capitalism inevitably divides societies into rich and poor. Others cite behavioral factors that may promote a cycle of dependence—beginning with the inability to find or hold a steady job and possibly extending to other problems such as alcoholism and drug abuse. Because there are disagreements over its roots, lawmakers face difficult decisions about the best way to address poverty.

Washington's Role in Fighting Poverty. Before the Great Depression, giving aid to the nation's needy citizens was primarily the role of private charities, families, and churches; the federal government's role was small. However, the Great Depression of the 1930s compelled lawmakers in Washington to implement new policies to protect the nation's most vulnerable citizens. Thus, the New Deal was born.

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During the 1930s, the Great Depression produced widespread poverty throughout the United States. President Franklin Roosevelt and Congress responded by passing the landmark legislation known as the New Deal. Shown here are victims of the Great Depression awaiting food rations.

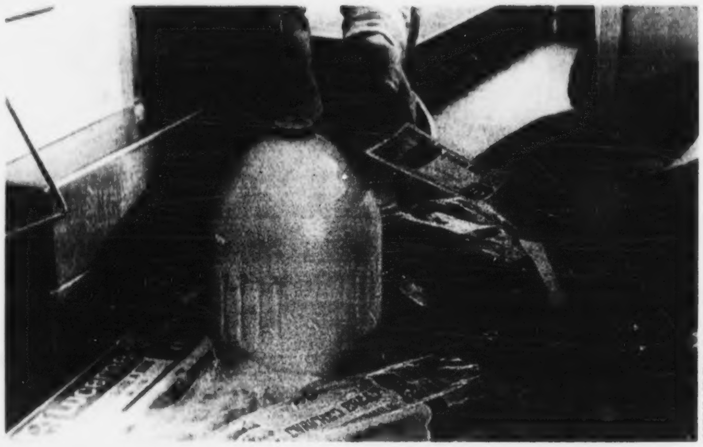
Library of Congress

The New Deal. When millions of Americans fell into poverty during the early 1930s, the states were financially ill-equipped to provide for the needy, and no federal policy was in place to deal with the problem. President Franklin Roosevelt and Congress wrote landmark legislation, known collectively as the New Deal, to combat the effects of the Great Depression. The new legislation included massive job programs that provided work for unemployed Americans. Other programs focused on people who did not work because of age or disability. The legislation also aimed to provide decent housing for the poor.

Social Security. Formally named Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance, Social Security was created in 1935 to provide assistance to low-income elderly Americans. The largest social program today, Social Security is a self-perpetuating trust fund, financed by equal contributions from employer and employee. The amount individuals receive at retirement is based on their average monthly earnings over a number of years while they were working. All citizens over age 65, regardless of income, are eligible to receive varying levels of Social Security benefits.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Also created in 1935 as part of the Social Security Act, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was the program most often associated with the term "welfare." AFDC payments went to low-income families with children under 18, in which one or both parents were deceased, incapacitated, absent, or unemployed. In practice, most payments went to single mothers. The federal government and the states shared AFDC costs, which grew dramatically during the recession of the early 1990s. In 1995, 14 million people received AFDC benefits, totaling about $17 billion. In 1996, the program was ended after sixty-one years by President Clinton and Congress in a law that handed authority over welfare to state governments.

Public Housing. Another part of the New Deal legislation was the U.S. Housing Act, passed in 1937,



Under the federal government's food stamp program, millions of Americans are able to pay for food with government coupons instead of money.

CORBIS/UPI/Bettmann

The act aimed to eliminate slums and construct low-rent housing for low-income Americans. For the next three decades, local public-housing authorities built and operated apartment buildings. However, many such buildings fell into disrepair and needed more and more government funding for maintenance. Therefore, in 1974, Congress created the Section 8 program to revitalize public housing and control federal spending. Under Section 8, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) subsidizes (pays part of) the rent for low-income tenants. According to federal guidelines, public-housing residents must contribute 30 percent of their income toward rent and HUD makes up the difference.

The Great Society. The legacy of Roosevelt's New Deal continued with President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. In 1964, President Johnson declared that no society could be great with poverty in its midst. Along with major civil rights legislation, Johnson implemented social programs designed to eliminate poverty by moving people up the economic ladder through vocational education and job training. He also promoted programs to help poor and older Americans get enough food and adequate health care. Johnson called his plan the Great Society.

Food Stamps. The U.S. Department of Agriculture instituted the federal food stamp program in 1964 to ensure that people with little or no income would have enough to eat. Instead of providing money, the food stamp program gives coupons, or vouchers, that are redeemable only for food. In 1997, the U.S. government spent about $20 billion on food stamps.

Medicaid and Medicare. Since 1965, Medicaid has provided low-income people with free or subsidized medical care. President Johnson and Congress created Medicaid in 1965 as a federal-state partnership to provide health insurance for the low-income elderly and the poor. An estimated 33 million people were on the Medicaid rolls in 1997, with the federal government spending $95.6 billion (57 percent of the total) while states spent $72 billion (43 percent).

Medicare, also instituted in 1965, pays health care benefits to almost 40 million older and disabled Americans. The government allotted more than $200 billion for Medicare payments in 1997. While many lower-income older Americans benefit from Medicaid, all people of retirement age receive Medicare benefits.

Back to the States. Since the mid-1960s, the federal government has spent trillions of dollars to reduce poverty, and yet the percentage of Americans in poverty has remained at 10 percent or higher for the past three decades. Critics of federal social programs cite this as evidence that these programs have not worked. Others maintain that without social programs, poverty in America would be much worse. Still, beginning in the 1980s, the effectiveness of the federal government in combating poverty came under attack. As the budget deficit increased and homelessness worsened, many Americans called for a reevaluation of social programs.

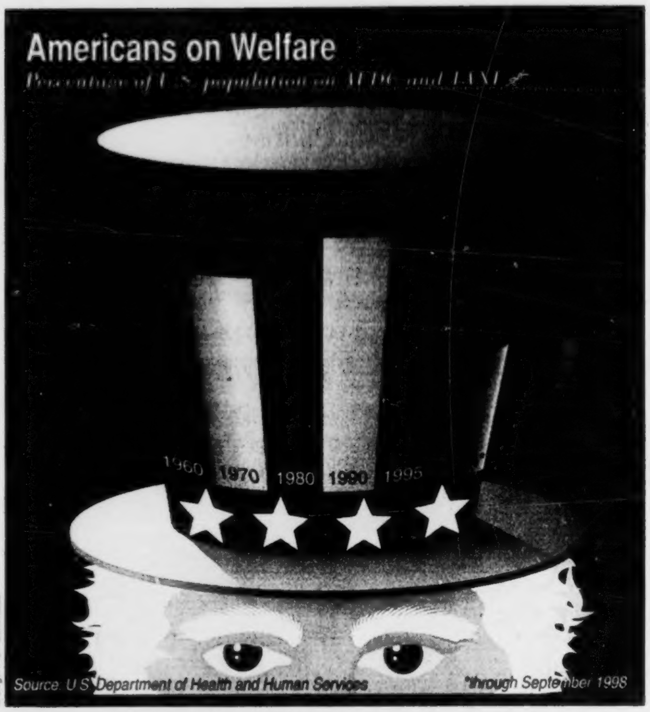
No other program received more criticism than AFDC. AFDC was a more controversial program than, for example, food stamps or Medicaid because it was a direct cash payment; recipients could spend the money on anything they wanted. Critics charged that AFDC inadvertently encouraged poor women to have more children and provided incentives for recipients to stay unemployed. They said it was time for bold experimentation, including taking welfare out of the hands of the federal government.

President Clinton came into office in 1993 promising to "end welfare as we know it." In August 1996, Congress passed, and the president signed, a historic welfare reform bill called the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. The new law terminated the AFDC program and authorized states to run their own welfare programs using block grants from the federal government called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Among the major provisions of the law are requirements that adults on welfare find work within two years and receive benefits for no more than a total of five years during a lifetime.

CURRENT ISSUES

Welfare and the States. In October 1996, the federal government began giving states TANF block grants to run their own welfare programs. Two years later, state governments reported that their welfare caseloads dropped an average of more than 20 percent. Many credit the 1996 law with precipitating this decrease. Others remain skeptical, arguing that the robust U.S. economy is most responsible. With the poverty rate and welfare rolls declining in recent years, many lawmakers have hailed the new state-based welfare system as a resounding success.

However, critics argue that the results are at best mixed. They believe that it is too early to celebrate because the genuine effects of the 1996 law have yet to emerge. Despite the drop in welfare caseloads, many experts are convinced that low-income Americans are not being properly prepared to maintain long-term, fruitful employment. Some studies indicate that social workers are pushing welfare recipients into dead-end jobs that do not provide enough income for them to live decently. Critics argue that insufficient attention is being paid to teaching the needy the necessary skills to be economically self-sufficient. They believe that, unless the federal government mandates that more education and job training be provided, state-based welfare remains shortsighted and doomed to fail in the long run.



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services *through September 1998

Glasgow & Associates

Since the passage of the 1996 welfare reform bill, the number of Americans who depend on food stamps and cash assistance from the government has decreased.

On the other hand, proponents of state-run welfare believe that the federal government's inefficiency allowed welfare to become a lifelong entitlement instead of temporary, transitional relief. They argue that states are less bureaucratic, more innovative, and therefore better equipped to help their needy citizens. Many governors say the results from the past two years speak for themselves: Every state except Hawaii has seen its welfare caseload drop or stay level. Supporters of state-based welfare believe that reform must emphasize "work first"—that is, move welfare recipients into a job first. State-based welfare supporters also contend that experience and training, which come with employment, can lead to enhanced income. Many lawmakers believe that a "get tough" approach on chronic welfare recipients was just the right move and to replace the "work first" requirement with a job training and education requirement would be a step back.

A Housing Crisis? Despite America's booming economy, a government report issued in 1998 revealed that a record 5.3 million low-income households are in desperate need of housing assistance. Faced with high

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rents and substandard living conditions, these families have not benefited from the vigorous U.S. economy. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew Cuomo said, "The report makes it clear that the federal government must significantly enhance its efforts to create more affordable housing opportunities."

Supporters of public housing think that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides a valuable transitional service to the poor. They believe that public-housing programs, many of which include job training, help people move from welfare to work. Advocates point out that more than three-quarters of public-housing residents leave the program in less than ten years—after they have greater sources of income and are self-sufficient. They also note that public-housing projects provide one of the only sources of low-rent housing for the poor and prevent people from being homeless. Many also contend that public-housing projects improve communities by building safe neighborhoods for low-income residents.

On the other hand, critics believe that providing inexpensive public housing is a disincentive for people to work. Opponents contend that public housing is a welfare program that needs to be reformed to encourage people to be independent of all forms of public assistance. They also argue that public-housing pro-

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) helps build low-rent housing for families who live at or below the poverty level. Shown here is public housing in Alexandria, Virginia.

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

THE KERNER COMMISSION REPORT: THIRTY YEARS LATER

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson appointed the Kerner Commission to examine race and poverty in the United States. The commission reported that the United States was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." In 1998, a new report by the Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation suggests that that prediction has come to pass. Poverty, according to the report, has become entrenched in the nation's inner cities, creating a cycle of unemployment and hopelessness. It recommended that the federal government devote more resources to implement job training and education programs in the inner city. Critics of the Eisenhower report dismissed it as a rehash of old-fashioned 1960s liberal social policy.

jects create concentrations of poverty in certain areas of town, resulting in substandard living conditions and increased crime in those areas. Finally, some people think that the public-housing agencies are bureaucratic, inefficient, and wasteful.

Help for Low-Income Working Families. Millions of Americans work in low-paying jobs and do not earn enough money to support their families. To enhance their income, they may be eligible for the earned income tax credit (EITC). In 1997, the maximum credit for an individual with one child was $2,152. However, the credit is gradually phased out as the person's income increases. One of the largest federal antipoverty programs, the EITC will provide $167 billion of tax benefits over the next five years to low-income working families.

In his 1993 economic program, the president proposed, and Congress enacted, legislation to substantially expand the EITC, helping 15 million low-income working families. Many lawmakers support the tax credit because they believe it helps families and rewards work. Unlike welfare, the EITC is available only to people who work. According to a 1998 report by President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, the EITC lifted 4.3 million Americans out of poverty in 1997, reducing the number of children living in poverty by 2.2 million.

Opponents of the current EITC say that, although the plan is a good way to encourage work, it has weaknesses. Some members of Congress have proposed cuts to the EITC. They believe that the promise of a tax credit causes some taxpayers to falsely report their earnings. Other Americans think that able-bodied adults without children should not be eligible for this program. In addition, some lawmakers question whether the tax credit actually eases the poverty burden and inspires American men and women to cast off welfare and seek better-paying jobs. They wonder if it encourages workers to earn just enough each year to qualify for the tax credit, but no more.

OUTLOOK

Opinion polls suggest that the public remains deeply concerned about low-income Americans but disagrees about what role the government should play in alleviating their condition. While some favor a stronger investment in education and training to help poor Americans become self-sufficient, others believe that strict work requirements and time limits on welfare benefits are the best remedy. Still others, however, think that those who criticize the less-fortunate in society have no idea what it is like to be poor and therefore are unqualified to speak authoritatively on what is best for them. As lawmakers at the federal, state, and local levels closely monitor the ongoing effects of the 1996 welfare reform bill, Americans will continue to debate the question of what the country owes its less-fortunate citizens.

THE DEBATE: POVERTY

State-based welfare is succeeding.

PRO: The 1996 welfare reform bill has allowed state governments to administer their own programs, creating room for innovation and experimentation. Over the past three years, welfare caseloads across the country have declined dramatically. The positive results are evidence that states are better equipped than the federal government to help low-income Americans become less dependent on government assistance and more economically self-sufficient.

CON: The decline in welfare rolls does not hide the fact that former welfare recipients are not being properly trained to remain in the workforce. Low-skilled Americans are being pushed into low-paying jobs that do not provide enough income or incentive for them to stay employed. Education and training are the key to successful and lasting welfare reform. So far, state government efforts have been shortsighted and are doomed to eventually fail.

The government should increase funding for public housing.

PRO: There is not enough decent, affordable housing for low-income families in the United States. Public housing helps families fend off homelessness by renting apartments at reasonable rates. Urban, and even some suburban, neighborhoods are reporting profound shortages in available housing—a problem that may escalate into a crisis for the less-fortunate of society if the federal government does not step in and provide greater support.

CON: Public housing promotes dependence on government programs and does not encourage poor people to work and be self-sufficient. These programs also tend to concentrate the problems of poverty into specific areas. Like many federal initiatives that are designed to benefit low-income Americans, the housing program is bureaucratic, inefficient, and has done little to cure problems associated with housing for the poor.

The government should expand the earned income tax credit.

PRO: The federal government must be committed to helping low-income workers meet the cost of raising their children. The EITC has been a proven safety net for working families. The tax credit keeps these families from falling below the poverty line. Recent studies show that the EITC has helped lift millions of Americans out of poverty. The tax credit helps low-income citizens recognize that working is more commendable than applying for welfare.

CON: Although the EITC may encourage some low-income Americans to work, it is in fact just another welfare program with major weaknesses. The EITC's costs are escalating, as it becomes one of the fastest growing entitlement programs. Some men and women will work just enough hours to receive maximum benefits, but no more. In addition, the promise of an EITC causes some of its recipients to falsely report their earnings to qualify for a higher credit.

Women and Minorities

The authors of the Constitution might be shocked to see the many Americans who have been granted civil rights protections. When the Constitution was written in 1787, only white male property owners were protected by it and given the right to vote. Gradually, rights were extended by law to nonlandowners, racial minorities, and women. In the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government outlawed discrimination based on race and gender and passed laws to protect the rights of minorities and women. Soon, other groups, such as older Americans and people with disabilities, began to demand—and win—their rights.

Key Questions

- Should affirmative action be abolished?
- Should special penalties apply to hate crimes?
- Should employment nondiscrimination laws protect homosexuals?

Although the United States has made great progress toward protecting its people from discrimination, some Americans favor stronger laws to guarantee that women and minorities are treated fairly by employers, businesses, and schools. However, others believe that civil rights laws—particularly affirmative action policies—have gone too far. They contend that certain government-granted rights and guarantees, designed to redress past wrongs against certain groups of people, may actually discriminate against other groups. Many lawmakers and citizens have called for these policies to be changed. In 1996, California became the first state to dismantle its affirmative action programs.

Forty years after the beginning of the modern civil rights movement, Americans have differing opinions about the meaning of "rights" and whether policies to correct past injustices are still necessary. Some think that too many groups in the United States still face discrimination and that it would be a mistake to abandon protections they believe have worked so well.

BACKGROUND

Discrimination in America

Racial Discrimination. After the Civil War, three constitutional amendments gave former slaves rights of citizenship: the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery; the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed civil rights; and the Fifteenth Amendment granted black males the right to vote. However, racial prejudice could not be easily legislated away. After postwar Reconstruction, southern states implemented "Jim Crow" laws, which segregated public facilities by race. These laws affected restaurants, theaters, schools, and even drinking fountains. In 1896, the Supreme Court upheld such laws in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson,* saying that segregation was legal as long as "separate but equal" facilities were provided.

In 1948, President Harry Truman proposed several reforms to address racial discrimination. He ordered the U.S. military to desegregate its units. Truman also proposed bills to protect all citizens' right to vote, to prohibit lynching, and to end discrimination on trains and other interstate transportation facilities. However, powerful southern senators and representatives in Congress blocked most attempts at reform.

Library of Congress

The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1868, guaranteed former slaves their civil rights. But the United States remained a nation legally divided by race for nearly 100 more years until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited the "Jim Crow" laws that segregated the races in the South.

Civil Rights Reforms. The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* sparked the modern civil rights movement. The Court unanimously ruled that maintaining separate schools for black and white students was unconstitutional because separate schools could not offer equal educational opportunities. Federal court judges later ordered many school districts to redraw boundary lines and bus children to schools outside their own neighborhoods, if necessary, to achieve racial integration in each district school.

Civil Rights Act of 1957. The Civil Rights Act of 1957 was the first attempt since Reconstruction to institute comprehensive civil rights legislation. This law made it illegal to prevent people from voting in federal elections. It also created the U.S. Civil Rights Commission (an advisory panel) and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. However, the act had many loopholes and proved largely ineffective in securing the universal right to vote.

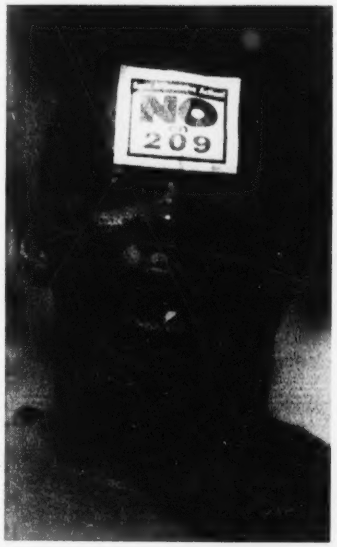
Twenty-fourth Amendment. In 1964, the Twenty-fourth Amendment was added to the Constitution. This amendment barred the use of a poll tax (a tax that was often used to prevent low-income African Americans from voting) or any other tax in federal elections. A 1966 Supreme Court ruling extended the amendment to state and local elections.

Civil Rights Act of 1964. The landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public accommodations such as restaurants and hotels and in programs receiving federal aid. This far-reaching legislation also prohibited job discrimination by employers and unions, established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and strengthened enforcement of voting and desegregation laws.

Affirmative Action. In the early 1960s, President John Kennedy issued a series of executive orders requiring federal contractors to "take affirmative action" to ensure that their hiring practices did not discriminate on the basis of race or gender. His successors, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, expanded these programs.

The goal of affirmative action is to match the racial and gender composition of the workplace and higher education with that of society as a whole. The policies require governments and government contractors to take an active role to help some minority groups overcome past discrimination, by considering race or gender as a factor when hiring or awarding contracts. Many businesses, universities, and colleges have voluntarily adopted affirmative action programs.

However, many Americans believe that affirmative action can lead to racial quotas and charge that it promotes reverse discrimination, mostly against whites. In 1996, California voters approved a sweeping initiative—called Proposition 209—that barred the state from discriminating against, or granting "preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting." Although opponents argued that Proposition 209 was unconstitutional, federal courts upheld the measure in 1997.



AP Photo/Dwayne Newton

Many Californians protested the passage of the controversial Proposition 209, which legally ended affirmative action programs in the state.

Minority enrollment at top graduate programs in state-funded schools dropped after Proposition 209 went into effect. At the University of California at Los Angeles Law School, for example, only 21 black students were admitted in 1997—down from 104 in 1996. Critics say the new law has led to the exclusion of African Americans and Latinos from universities. Supporters, however, think that minorities should be judged solely on their merits when applying for admission, and that affirmative action actually harms those it is intended to help because it attaches a stigma to minority graduates.

In 1998, a proposition to end most affirmative action programs in Washington state passed overwhelmingly.

Supporters of eliminating affirmative action hope other states will follow suit.

Voting Rights Act. Passed in 1965, the Voting Rights Act attempted to eliminate local laws and practices that prevented African Americans and other minorities from voting. The act forbids literacy tests, poll taxes, and intimidation of voters in any state.

Later Civil Rights Legislation. The Supreme Court interpreted earlier legislation that prohibited discrimination by schools, governments, private organizations, and corporations as applicable only in the specific programs for which federal funds were received. Then, in 1988, Congress passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act, which prevents institutions that receive government money from discriminating in any of their programs on the basis of gender, race, age, or disability.

Discrimination Against Women. In the 1960s and early 1970s, women began mobilizing support against gender discrimination. Inspired by the civil rights movement, women sought expanded access to jobs, more political influence, and a greater recognition of their abilities and equality.

Suffrage Movement. Several generations earlier, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony had led the suffrage movement to get the vote for women. Suffragists tried to include women in the Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, which guaranteed the right to vote to all men, regardless of race. However, that idea was blocked by members of Congress who feared that a provision giving women the right to vote would keep the entire amendment from passing.

Despite this setback, the suffrage movement continued, and by 1912 women had won the vote in nine western states. In 1916, the National Woman's Party organized support for a national suffrage amendment, and on August 18, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, extending to women the right to vote in all state and national elections.

Laws Against Gender Discrimination. The women's rights movement made great progress in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1963, Congress adopted the Equal Pay Act, which guaranteed equal pay for men and women who perform equal work. In the early 1970s, the Supreme Court applied clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to strike down laws that discriminated against women. A 1972 law barred gender-based discrimination in all education programs receiving federal support. And in 1978, Congress amended the Civil Rights Act to prohibit job discrimination against pregnant women. Despite progress in achieving equal rights, many Americans believed that only a constitutional amendment could correct gender discrimination for good.

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). In 1971, Congress passed a proposed amendment to the Constitution that supporters thought would guarantee equal rights for women. The Equal Rights Amendment stated: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The controversial amendment was never added to the Constitution, falling a few states short of the three-fourths necessary for ratification.

THE PAY GAP

"Equal pay for equal work" is the primary concern of working women in America, according to a survey conducted by the AFL-CIO in 1997. Department of Labor statistics show that, on average, women make only seventy-five cents for every dollar men earn. Experts cite several reasons for the "wage gap": the segregation of occupations based on gender; pay discrimination; and women's lower level of education and experience—often because of time spent raising children. Advocates of equal pay protections are encouraging new federal legislation to prohibit such inequities.

Discrimination Against People with Disabilities. In the past, Americans with disabilities were segregated in special schools and commonly denied college educations. Consequently, they often had to settle for low-paying jobs. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 outlawed some barriers to equal education and created job opportunities for disabled people. The law prohibited employers who receive federal aid or who work on government contracts from refusing to hire people with disabilities. The act also required that colleges make buildings accessible to people who are blind or in wheelchairs.

In 1990, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the most extensive civil rights legislation since the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This law protects people with physical and mental disabilities by prohibiting discrimination in employment, transportation, telecommunications, services, and public places such as restaurants, theaters, and stores. In 1997, with President Bill Clinton's support, Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which revamped an older law guaranteeing adequate public education to disabled children and providing more funding to schools.

Discrimination Against Homosexuals. In recent years, homosexual men and women have asked the government to protect them from discrimination. Although federal law does not extend civil rights protections based on sexual orientation, several cities, counties, and states have passed bans on discrimination against gay men and lesbians. Other states and communities, including Colorado, decided protections were going too far and banned homosexual antidiscrimination legislation. However, in 1996, the Supreme Court struck down the Colorado law, saying it was unconstitutional.

Same-sex marriages are not legally recognized in any state and specifically prohibited by twenty-nine states and Congress. Married people can often be covered under their spouse's health plans, file joint tax returns, and make important medical decisions for their spouses, but homosexual couples are often denied these rights. Gay rights activists, who believe that marriage is a basic human right that any committed couple is entitled to, support the legalization of same-sex marriage. Some local governments have granted certain rights to gay couples and allowed them to register as "domestic partners," and many companies recognize same-sex couples in their benefits policies.

In 1993, the Supreme Court of Hawaii ruled that it was unconstitutional for the state to deny the right of marriage to gay couples. However, in 1998, Hawaiians voted for a constitutional amendment empowering the state legislature to amend the constitution to prohibit gay marriages.

A Progress Report. Many Americans believe that most of the civil rights violations and inequities of the past are just that—past. Women and racial minorities have made tremendous strides in all aspects of public life. Female-owned businesses have increased from 500,000 in 1972 to almost 8 million in 1996. Women now receive more than half of all college degrees awarded. In 1995, 13 percent of African Americans had attended at least four years of college as compared to just 3 percent in 1960. The percentage of blacks living in the suburbs—evidence of a steadily growing black middle class—more than doubled between 1950 and 1995.

Nonetheless, many Americans believe that women and minorities still face obstacles in society, including pay discrepancies, racism and sexism, and a disproportionate share of problems like violence and poverty. While it is true that significant civil rights progress has been made over the years, many

indianunity.org
indianunity.org
Native

Ed Felker/American Indian Report

Although Native Americans may be considered a demographic minority, they are recognized by the U.S. government as members of separate nations. In May 1999, people from various Indian nations demonstrated for tribal self-determination and self-government. Here, Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-Colo.) addresses the rally.

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lawmakers and advocates argue that there is more work to be done.

CURRENT ISSUES

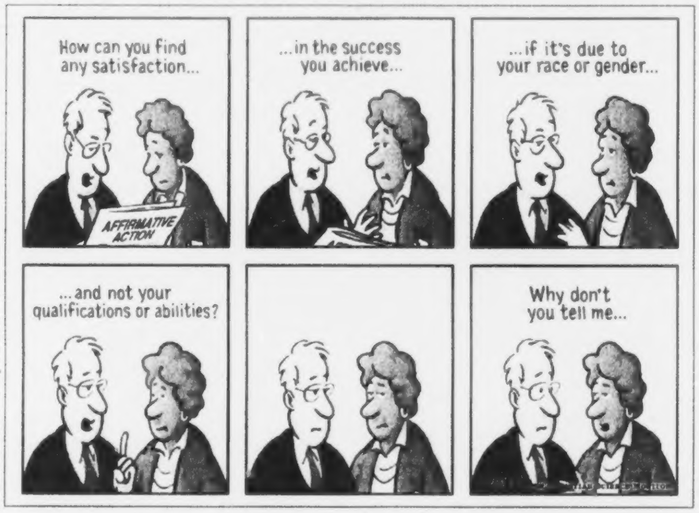
Reverse Discrimination or Necessary Remedy? Many governments, federal contractors, businesses, and universities have encouraged the recruitment and hiring of racial minorities and women through affirmative action programs. However, these policies have been challenged on many fronts across the United States. In recent years, members of Congress have introduced bills that would end affirmative action. The Supreme Court ruled that affirmative action programs must address specific, identifiable past acts of discrimination as opposed to a general presumption of discrimination. Lawmakers will continue to monitor the effects of Proposition 209 in California, as well as the recent dismantling of Washington state's affirmative action programs.

Opponents of affirmative action believe that decisions based on race or gender alone violate the core American value of equal opportunity under the law. They argue that affirmative action forces employers, universities, and governments to fill specific quotas, which can lead to race and gender being placed above all other qualifications. Such policies, according to critics, lead to better-qualified whites and Asians being denied employment or educational opportunities. Furthermore, some contend that affirmative action implies that minorities and women cannot compete on their own merit, thereby undermining their efforts and accomplishments.

Many Americans, on the other hand, maintain that affirmative action has been an effective tool for correcting bias in hiring, college enrollment, and government contracting. They argue that, though there have been major advances in civil rights over the last thirty years, it has not been enough to make up for hundreds of years of slavery and second-class citizenship. According to supporters, affirmative action is not simply retribution for past injustices but an attempt to level the playing field. They believe that affirmative action is necessary to force businesses and schools to make an effort to search for qualified female and minority candidates who may not have the same resources and access as white males.

Prosecuting Hate. Crimes committed because of a bias against an individual's or group's race, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation can be designated as hate crimes. Hate crimes are most commonly committed because of race, followed by religion and then sexual orientation. Most states and the federal government have special statutes that mandate stiffer penalties for criminals convicted of hate crimes. Deciding who should be protected by hate crime laws is controversial; most states as well as the federal government do not include crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation.

Two highly publicized hate crimes in 1998—the beating death of an openly gay student in Wyoming and the racially motivated killing of a black man in Texas—brought renewed national attention to the issue. A proposed Hate Crimes Prevention Act, supported by President Clinton, would allow the Justice Department to federally prosecute local hate


How can you find any satisfaction...
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
...in the success you achieve...
...if it's due to your race or gender...
...and not your qualifications or abilities?
Why don't you tell me...

Clay Bennett/The Christian Science Monitor

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Mourners light candles in memory of gay student Matthew Shepard, who was brutally beaten and then left to die on a Wyoming fence. Many Americans believe his attackers were motivated by hatred of homosexuals.

AP Photo/Suzanne Plunkett

crimes and impose special penalties, as well as extend federal hate crime law to include crimes based on sex, sexual orientation, and disability.

Opponents of special designations for hate crimes note that, by definition, these actions are already illegal and do not require additional penalties. They also argue that all crime is offensive and damaging, regardless of the criminal's motivation. Some experts maintain that hate crime laws are unconstitutional. They say that the laws violate people's First Amendment rights by more heavily punishing those with particular viewpoints. Critics believe that this is a slippery slope that could lead to prosecuting people based on their ideas.

Advocates of special penalties for hate crimes believe that tougher sentences are needed to address the damage these crimes inflict on the victim and on society at large. They argue that the motivations for hate crimes, such as racism and homophobia, harm the community and humanity in general. Some experts favor hate crime laws because, like antidiscrimination laws, they can discourage prejudice. Moreover, the Supreme Court ruled in 1993 that hate crime penalty enhancements do not violate First Amendment rights.

Employment Nondiscrimination and Sexual Orientation. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits unreasonable discrimination. Over the years, the Supreme Court has ruled that certain groups who have been the victim of past discrimination, such as women and racial minorities, receive heightened protection under the Fourteenth Amendment. Currently, federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, and disability but does not extend similar protection to homosexuals. Homosexual advocates have lobbied for such protection in various areas, including employment discrimination.

Recent Supreme Court decisions have both pleased and disappointed activists on both sides of this issue. In 1996, the Supreme Court struck down a Colorado law that prohibited nondiscrimination laws for gays. More recently, the Court has indicated that it is unwilling to grant homosexuals heightened protection under the law. In October 1998, the Court let stand a Cincinnati city charter amendment that permits employers, landlords, and business owners to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. Currently, only ten states prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. In a special 1998 referendum, Maine voters repealed a state law that had made it illegal to discriminate against gays.

In 1996, an attempt in the U.S. Senate to extend job antidiscrimination protection to homosexuals lost by one vote. The next year, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) was introduced in both houses of Congress. This act prohibited bias in hiring based on sexual orientation. Ultimately, neither the House nor Senate voted on the proposed bill, but there are plans to reintroduce the legislation in the 106th Congress.

AMERICA'S REPORT CARD ON RACE RELATIONS

In 1997, President Clinton, calling for "a great and unprecedented conversation about race," appointed an advisory board made up of historians and scholars. In September 1998, Clinton formally accepted their report, which suggested that America has a long way to go toward racial harmony. Proposed measures include, among other things, the creation of a permanent race council, as well as public education programs highlighting the nation's "common values." While praising the president's initiative, some civil rights leaders complained that recommendations were too modest. Other critics argued that the real barriers to equal opportunity—poor city schools, out-of-wedlock births, and violent crime—were not addressed.

Supporters of ENDA cite numerous American businesses—including many Fortune 500 companies—that have already included homosexual nondiscrimination clauses in their employment policies. They argue that passing ENDA will merely extend equal rights to gays, not bestow special rights. They also point out that the proposed federal legislation explicitly prohibits quotas or preferential treatment.

Opponents of the legislation believe sexual orientation is a choice, unlike race or gender, and therefore not deserving of special protection. Some believe granting homosexuals protected class status would encourage an immoral lifestyle and further contribute to the breakdown of the family in American society. Still others believe that local communities need to make individual decisions about the issue.

OUTLOOK

Despite the progress achieved in extending civil rights to all Americans over the past thirty years, some citizens believe that discrimination is still a major problem. They say that the federal government has not done enough to eliminate discrimination against minorities, women, homosexuals, and people with disabilities. However, others argue that government actions to make up for past discrimination have gone too far and actually discriminate against other groups, particularly white males. Lawmakers and the public must decide how much they are willing to scale back these policies without giving free rein to discrimination in U.S. companies and universities.

THE DEBATE: WOMEN AND MINORITIES

Affirmative action should be abolished.

PRO: Affirmative action is just another term for quotas. Quotas were once used to prevent qualified minorities from finding jobs. Using quotas to help minorities and women now is no less discriminatory. Employers and universities should look for the most qualified candidates, regardless of race and gender. Affirmative action encourages people to place color and gender above all else.

CON: Discrimination against minorities and women still exists in the United States today. Affirmative action helps prevent this and also compensates for past injuries. These programs ensure that qualified persons do not lose out because of their gender or race. Eliminating affirmative action would give employers an excuse to return to the discriminatory practices of the past.

Special penalties should apply to hate crimes.

PRO: Hate crime laws are necessary because violence motivated by hate harms not only the victim of the crime but also society at large. A criminal's motivation—and the harm done to the community—needs to be taken into account when sentencing. Hate crime laws also discourage prejudice.

CON: A hate crime is already an illegal act and therefore should be punished by standard criminal procedures. All crimes are offensive and damaging, regardless of the criminal's motivation. Hate crime laws violate people's First Amendment rights because they punish them for their thoughts and beliefs.

Federal law should protect homosexuals from employment discrimination.

PRO: Homosexuals are often discriminated against based on their sexual orientation. Federal law guarantees fairness in the workplace. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act would extend these equal rights to homosexuals, not grant special rights. Many American companies have already led the way by adding a sexual orientation nondiscrimination clause into their hiring policies.

CON: Sexual orientation is a choice, unlike race or gender; therefore, it does not deserve special protection from the government. Doing so might promote what some Americans consider to be an immoral lifestyle that has contributed to the decay of the family unit. Besides, individual localities, and not the federal government, should determine whether to include homosexuals in nondiscrimination laws.

Foreign Policy Issues

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INTRODUCTION

The world has witnessed historic changes during the 1990s. Early in the decade, the Cold War ended, the Soviet Union broke apart, and communism virtually disappeared from Europe. Improved communication and increased trade among nations continued to add to international interdependence. Democracy spread around the world to nations as far apart as South Africa, Russia, and Haiti.

In recent years, leaders in the Middle East have made great strides in bringing peace to that war-torn region. U.S. armed forces found themselves in a new role, patrolling places such as Bosnia as peacekeeping forces. The post–Cold War world has become more peaceful, as many nations have begun shifting their foreign policy focus away from potential conflicts with one another and toward greater cooperation.

Until the late 1800s, the United States was largely uninvolved in world affairs. However, its economic and military power grew in the twentieth century, as did its ability to influence other nations. After the end of World War II in 1945, the United States and the Soviet Union—the world's two dominant powers—became locked in a Cold War that would last until the early 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since then American officials have worked to define a new role for the United States on the international scene.

Just as U.S. leaders identify the nation's foreign policy goals, they also must determine the best way to achieve those objectives and deal with both ongoing situations and changing circumstances. Some methods are public, while others take place behind the scenes. One way U.S. officials work with other countries is through diplomacy—meetings between government leaders or their representatives. Diplomacy also includes friendly persuasion, pressure, and advice.

For example, American officials can use trade policies as a means to implement foreign policy. Another method is through economic or military aid programs.

Policymakers may also try to sway the citizens of other countries through newspapers, books, and radio and television broadcasts, or they may arrange scientific and cultural exchanges to help promote goodwill toward the United States. Nations also belong to international organizations, such as the United Nations, where they debate global concerns. Finally, the U.S. government can use military force to protect its interests and those of friendly nations.

In the United States, both the executive and legislative branches are responsible for foreign policy. The president generally sets the agenda for foreign policy decisions by appointing ambassadors, negotiating treaties, and serving as commander in chief of the armed forces. The Department of State carries out the president's foreign policy. State Department officials represent the United States in international negotiations, staff American embassies around the world, promote cultural exchanges between U.S. and foreign citizens, and protect American citizens and investments abroad. Congress has the power to approve presidential nominations for ambassadorships and top State Department positions; declare war; ratify treaties; provide money for foreign aid and military programs; and pass laws or resolutions stating a specific foreign policy.

The administration and Congress do not always agree on foreign policy. Some policymakers think that the government is too involved in foreign affairs and should pay more attention to domestic issues. Others believe that the world's nations are becoming more interdependent and that the United States needs to increase its involvement with other countries. The challenge is to strike a balance between working to help solve the world's problems and dealing with issues at home.

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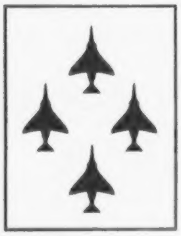

DEFENSE

During the 1990s, U.S. leaders have struggled to define what the role of the U.S. armed forces should be in the post–Cold War world. For forty years, the military focused its resources on containing communism in Europe and Asia and protecting allies from the Soviet Union. The United States developed nuclear and conventional weapons and built up the armed forces to support this mission. After the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, the U.S. military underwent changes as it adjusted to new budgetary constraints and a relaxation of tensions worldwide. Nevertheless, the nation's armed forces remained active around the world, often in nontraditional humanitarian and peacekeeping roles in Rwanda, Haiti, and Bosnia.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States increase defense spending?
- Is the two-war strategy obsolete?
- Should U.S. armed forces participate in peacekeeping missions?

However, these missions raised questions about whether the U.S. military should be involved in the expensive, often dangerous businesses of peacekeeping and humanitarian aid. Concerns arose over the threat of terrorism in the aftermath of bombings at two U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998. In addition, many lawmakers criticize the cuts in the defense budget implemented by the Clinton administration. In 1997, defense spending dropped to about 17 percent of the federal budget—the lowest level in fifty years. Troop levels have been reduced and less money allocated to develop new high-tech equipment. Morale and military readiness may have suffered as a result, prompting President Clinton in 1999 to propose the largest increase in defense spending in fifteen years.

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BACKGROUND

U.S. Defense Policy

What Type of Military Does the United States Need? Currently, about 1.4 million men and women serve on active duty in the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. These troops, with their weapons and equipment, support the nation's military goals and protect and defend its vital national interests, including the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the United States and the lives and well-being of its citizens.

The United States spends billions of dollars each year maintaining a strong defense to deter other nations from mounting an attack. Political and military leaders want potential enemies to know that if the United States is attacked, it will repel the invasion and defeat the aggressors. The United States also uses its armed forces to demonstrate its power and to help maintain stable and friendly governments around the world.

In the past, U.S. forces were trained to defend against one main enemy, the Soviet Union. The national interests of the Soviet Union and the United States were in direct conflict. For more than forty years, the two superpowers competed for military dominance, influence, and power, conducting a Cold War that shaped worldwide defense strategies and relations.

After the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991 and the Cold War ended, U.S. leaders began redefining the mission of the armed forces by de-emphasizing the protection of Europe and focusing instead on defending other national interests and allies around the globe. These changing priorities have required a modified military strategy. Since 1993, defense planners have restructured the armed forces so that, if necessary, they can fight two regional wars at once, though the value of this strategy and the spending it requires are matters of debate. In 1995, the

Pentagon—the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defense—added a new goal, "peace engagement," to support its increasing number of global peacekeeping operations.

Preventing Nuclear War. After the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the Soviet Union rushed to develop a similar weapon. The Soviets conducted their first atomic test in 1949. The two sides competed for nuclear superiority during the Cold War. Because of the immense destructive power of nuclear weapons, the United States and the Soviet Union wanted to avoid nuclear conflicts. Therefore, they pursued a strategy called nuclear deterrence. Each nation reasoned that it must keep its nuclear forces roughly equal to the other's to avoid an attack. Thus, the two giants matched one another's improvements in atomic weapons—including the number and power of such arms as well as their delivery systems. The result of the nuclear deterrence strategy was the production of tens of thousands of nuclear devices in both the Soviet Union and the United States.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the two superpowers agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals. Although the United States and Russia signed more arms control agreements after the end of the Cold War, each

The Pentagon, near Washington, D.C., serves as headquarters for the U.S. Department of Defense. More than 23,000 employees—both civilian and military—work in the building.

Department of Defense Photo by MSGT Ken Hammond USAF country still has between 6,000 and 8,000 nuclear devices.

Defending and Supporting Allies. After World War II, the United States helped create the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance that includes Canada, most western European countries, Greece, and Turkey. During the Cold War, NATO defended western Europe against communist aggression. At the height of the Cold War, the United States had more than 300,000 troops stationed in NATO countries in Europe. By 1997, that number had shrunk to 100,000.

After the collapse of the Soviet-led military alliance known as the Warsaw Pact, many eastern European countries and former Soviet republics wanted to join NATO. The United States and other NATO members offered more than twenty of these countries a "partnership" with NATO in 1993. In 1998, the U.S. Senate ratified NATO expansion, giving membership to three eastern European countries—the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. These countries officially joined the alliance in 1999.

Along with protecting NATO members, the United States is also committed by treaty to defend other allies around the world, including Japan, South Korea, and many Latin American countries. In the late 1990s, the United States cultivated ties to more than 100 nations by consulting and advising their governments on military security matters.

Use of Force. During the Cold War, the United States wanted to "contain" or limit communist influence and expansion. Consequently, U.S. leaders often used military force to support pro-American governments fighting communist-backed invasions or insurrections. When communist North Korea invaded

THE WAR POWERS ACT

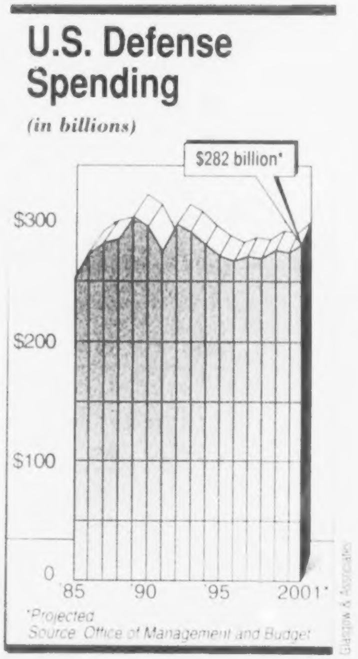
The Constitution names the president commander in chief of the military but gives Congress the sole power to declare war. Since the end of World War II, presidents have often sent U.S. military forces to other countries without Congress declaring war. In 1973, Congress passed the War Powers Act. This law requires the president to advise Congress before sending troops to a potential combat zone; places a time limit on the use of troops without approval from Congress or a declaration of war; and gives Congress the power to order the president to bring the troops home.

noncommunist South Korea in 1950, the United States entered the war as the leader of a United Nations "police force." In 1954, when communist guerrillas and the army of North Vietnam threatened South Vietnam, the United States began what proved to be a nineteen-year military involvement with immense human and monetary costs. Perceptions of a communist threat also led to U.S. military interventions in Guatemala (1954), Lebanon (1958), Cuba (1961), the Dominican Republic (1965), and Grenada (1983).

The United States became more reluctant to intervene in foreign conflicts after the Vietnam War. However, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, U.S. officials renewed their commitment to building a strong military that could protect American interests around the world.

In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The United States and its allies formed a multilateral (many-sided) armed force of nearly 500,000 troops to force the Iraqi military to withdraw. In February 1991, after six weeks of bombing raids, U.S. and allied ground troops forced the Iraqi invaders out of Kuwait, bringing the Persian Gulf War to a close.

Iraq continued to be a target of U.S. military force throughout the 1990s. Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein continually refused to allow UN weapons inspectors entry into Iraqi weapons sites to make sure the government was not developing weapons of mass destruction. Iraq's refusal to comply has forced the United States and some of its allies to take military action on several occasions. In December 1998, U.S. and British warplanes conducted airstrikes against Iraqi military sites.



*Projected
Source: Office of Management and Budget

Glasgow & Associates

In the 1980s, defense spending increased dramatically. The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s led to a smaller defense budget.

Defense Buildup. The defense policies of the Cold War—nuclear deterrence, protecting allies, and containing communism—required a large military budget. Defense spending reached its peak during Ronald Reagan's presidency, increasing from $180 billion in 1980 to $299 billion in 1988. The U.S. Department of Defense used this money to purchase 90 new warships; 4,000 tanks; and hundreds of modern warplanes. The Pentagon also developed new high-technology weapons such as the MX, Midgetman, and Trident D-5 missiles, as well as the B-1 and B-2 (Stealth) bombers. Reagan also proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—commonly known as the "Star Wars" program. A space-based defense system, SDI would guard the United States from attack by long-range missiles.

A Smaller Defense. With successful multilateral action in the Persian Gulf War and the fall of communism across Europe, the U.S. military searched for a new focus in the early 1990s. Developing a new defense strategy has been a subject of heated debate, not just within the Pentagon but also between Congress and the president.

In 1993, defense planners assessed the nation's security needs. They defined the personnel, hardware, and budget needs for fighting two major regional wars at the same time. Officials then tried to reorganize the U.S. military accordingly. However, this process was complicated by proposals to reduce the federal budget deficit. In 1993 and 1994, President Clinton reduced the defense budget. His plans emphasized readiness rather than developing new high-tech weapons systems.

However, in late 1994, the reductions in defense spending, coupled with the expenses of peacekeeping operations, began to raise doubts about whether the U.S. military was equipped to fight wars in two theaters. As a result, the Department of Defense received additional funding from Congress to improve military readiness.

But some lawmakers said the additional money was still not enough. They said that high-tech weapons and equipment were essential to maintain a strong U.S. military. Suggestions included a national missile defense system—similar to the SDI system proposed in the 1980s. Others supported purchasing advanced ships and warplanes or improving long-range weapons and laser technology.

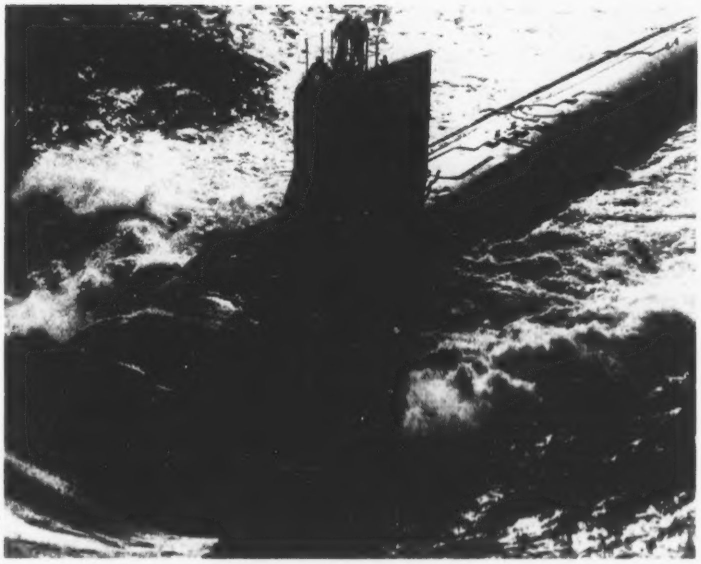
Some of these projects, particularly the development of new warplanes, were approved. However, because overall defense spending remained about the same, the Pentagon planned to pay for them through modest reductions in personnel. Nevertheless, through 1997, the two-war defense strategy continued to frame the budget and organization of the U.S. military.

Reviving "Star Wars"

The Clinton administration favors waiting until 2000 to decide whether to deploy a defense system that would shield the United States against missile attack. The CIA reported that "rogue" nations are at least ten years away from possessing long-range missiles that could reach the United States. However, in July 1998, an independent commission disputed this finding, contending that nations such as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are in fact much closer to developing the capability to fire nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons at the United States. In September, a bill to speed up development of a missile defense system fell short by one vote in the U.S. Senate.

Combating Terrorism. On August 7, 1998, U.S. embassies in the African countries of Kenya and Tanzania were destroyed by terrorist bombs. The two blasts killed hundreds, including twelve Americans. The bombing once again put the U.S. government on alert that the United States had become a top target of international terrorism. The U.S. military struck back at a number of facilities used by the terrorist network associated with Osama bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian millionaire. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) identified Bin Laden as the mastermind behind terrorist acts around the world, including the attacks on the embassies in Africa.

Many experts believe that terrorism will be one of the largest security threats to the United States in the next century. While U.S. leaders may be ready to respond and protect against "conventional terrorism"—attacks with conventional weapons—many fear that the threat of what is called "catastrophic terrorism" is not being properly addressed. Catastrophic terrorism involves the use of the deadliest biological and chemical weapons, or even nuclear weapons. Former director of the CIA John Deutch wrote in 1998: "The danger of weapons of mass destruction being used



The Defense Department spends more than $200 billion annually for defense contracts and work compensation across the United States, boosting many state economies. The Seawolf attack submarine (pictured here) is manufactured in Connecticut and Virginia.

U.S. Department of Defense

against America and its allies is greater now than at any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962." Many experts believe that preventing these attacks should be a top priority of the Department of Defense and CIA.

CURRENT ISSUES

More Money for Defense? In recent years, Pentagon officials have warned that the U.S. military's "readiness"—the ability to respond to international crises and defend against attack—has decayed. Many members of Congress believe that a decade of downsizing, coinciding with a sharp upturn in troop deployments overseas, have undermined the U.S. armed forces. In 1998, Army General David Bramlett said "We can no longer train and sustain the force" under current spending, and warned that "this threatens our ability to mobilize, deploy, fight, and win." Secretary of Defense William Cohen conceded, "There has been some erosion."

These concerns have led to calls from many lawmakers to increase defense spending, specifically on new weapons development and procurement. In February 1998, President Clinton proposed adding

$110 billion to the defense budget over six years—the largest increase since the mid-1980s. However, the balanced budget agreement reached in 1997 caps defense spending at about $270 billion through 2002. Many lawmakers favor renegotiating the agreement so more funds can be added. While many military officials concede that it would take as long as twenty years before nations such as China or a resurgent Russia could pose a credible challenge to U.S military superiority, real threats are posed by countries like North Korea and Iran in their quest for dangerous chemical and biological weapons. Proponents of more military spending argue that the United States is letting its guard down by maintaining a smaller defense budget.

However, others argue that more money is not necessarily the solution to sharpening U.S. military readiness. Some believe the Pentagon wastes money with weapons systems that are not needed and urge military officials to spend more wisely. In addition, opponents of a bigger defense budget point out that there are still many unnecessary military bases at home and overseas that could be closed. They also contend that the U.S. armed forces need to be reorganized and their mission tailored to fit the challenges of the post–Cold War world. While many critics concede that the defense budget should not be cut further, they argue that belt-tightening and reorganization can help improve the readiness of U.S. armed forces.

A New Defense Strategy? Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, defense planners, policymakers, and analysts have debated the nation's military strategy. During 1993, the Pentagon developed the strategy that would enable the United States to fight two regional wars simultaneously. In 1997, the Department of Defense decided to make small cuts in personnel to fund new weapons and equipment. Meanwhile it reasserted the two-war defense strategy and requested additional money to carry out this plan. Some policymakers, however, question whether the United States needs to be able to fight two wars at the same time.

Skeptics of the two-war strategy think that the twenty-first century will more likely bring terrorist attacks, electronic sabotage, or the use of chemical and biological weapons. Critics contend that combating these possibilities depends on stealth, mobility, and more timely intelligence. Instead of preparing for Cold War–style battles with large troop levels and massive numbers of tanks and artillery, many experts would rather focus on an even smaller, more agile military. They suggest, for example, keeping enough soldiers and equipment to fight one major war and

AP Photo/John McConnico

On August 7, 1998, a coordinated terrorist bombing occurred at the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The blasts killed hundreds and injured thousands. Preventing future terrorist attacks and bringing perpetrators to justice is one of the major challenges for the United States.

simultaneously carry out smaller peacekeeping operations.

Supporters of the two-war strategy counter that change must be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. They believe it is too risky to drastically reduce and reorganize the armed forces all at once. Secretary of Defense William Cohen said that the current plan "maintains our flexibility to respond to unforeseen challenges." Furthermore, proponents think that the two-war requirement is essential to protect U.S. interests around the world. They argue that the plan signals American military resolve, both in terms of supporting allies and deterring possible enemies.

Humanitarian and Peacekeeping Missions. Throughout the 1990s, the U.S. military has been active in enforcing international law and peace and relieving humanitarian crises in the developing world. To acknowledge its acceptance of this role, the Pentagon added a peacekeeping goal to its mission in 1995. However, some Americans question whether humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, and other "police" functions are responsibilities that the U.S. military should undertake.

Somalia. In December 1992, American armed forces embarked on an operation that provoked fierce

A FEW MORE GOOD WOMEN

In the 1990s, slow progress was made in extending more opportunities to women in the U.S. Marine Corps. The Corps lifted its ceiling on the recruitment of women, who currently constitute 5.4 percent of the 174,000 marines. As one marine recruiter explained, "Before, [recruiters] would pick the male. . . . Now they select whomever is better." Still, out of the three branches of the U.S. armed forces, the Marine Corps is by far the most gender-segregated force.

debate over the role of the U.S. military. More than 25,000 troops were sent to Somalia to ensure delivery of emergency food supplies to ease starvation brought on by civil war. After most U.S. troops had returned home in early 1993, a few thousand remained as part of a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force. In October 1993, while under UN command, eighteen Americans died in a clash with a Somali militia. That incident led many Americans to question the wisdom of placing U.S. forces under UN command. President Clinton withdrew all American troops from Somalia in early 1994.

Haiti. In 1991, a military coup resulted in the overthrow of Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In September 1994, 20,000 U.S. troops arrived in Haiti to maintain peace while the U.S. government helped organize Aristide's return to power after the military leaders stepped down. About 2,500 U.S. troops remained in Haiti until February 1996.

Bosnia. Doubts about peacekeeping missions were again raised in late 1995, when President Clinton ordered 20,000 U.S. troops to Bosnia to help NATO uphold a peace treaty ending Bosnia's three-year civil war. In late 1996, the president pledged to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia as part of a 30,000-strong NATO force through June 1998. However, in December 1997, Clinton announced that the presence of U.S. troops would be extended. Many Americans believed that the situation in Bosnia was not vital to U.S. interests and did not justify risking American lives.

While some Americans thought the missions in Somalia and Haiti were successful, others criticized the unclear military objectives of peacekeeping. Moreover, critics estimate that operations in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia cost the U.S. military more than $3 billion. To fund these missions, they say that the Pentagon has taken money away from training, maintenance, and new weapons spending. Therefore, they argue that if the U.S. military continues to respond to peacekeeping and humanitarian crises, its long-range readiness and technological superiority will be jeopardized. Furthermore, critics say that many regional crises are not crucial to U.S. interests and that they are not worth risking American lives.

However, other policymakers believe that multinational peacekeeping is a valuable tool in containing or stopping future regional conflicts before they become larger. They argue that peacekeeping missions may be a compromise between multilateral invasions and complete inaction. Supporters of peacekeeping missions suggest that new procedures for funding these missions can be established. Moreover, they say that solving humanitarian and political crises is always in the national interest, as the United States is invariably affected by such problems.

OUTLOOK

Since the end of the Cold War, many U.S. leaders and military officials remain uncertain about what kinds of battles and operations their armed forces should prepare for in the future. President Clinton and his foreign policy advisers are faced with two important questions: What does "national security" mean in the twenty-first century, and how should the government organize its defense forces to ensure that security? Some Americans believe that the defense budget should be increased to pay for the development of new high-tech equipment. Others say that the answer lies solely in reorganization and a clearer definition of the mission of the U.S. military. Faced with a reduced defense budget and bitter debates over foreign policy priorities, leaders have found that forging a new direction for the nation's defense is no easy task.

THE DEBATE: DEFENSE

The United States should increase defense spending.

PRO: The top priority of the government is to protect the national security of the United States. Military officials have warned that the readiness of the armed forces has suffered and that budget cuts have made them less prepared to protect U.S. vital interests at home and overseas. This perceived weakness could lead to war and greater costs down the road. Increasing spending on high-tech weaponry will help keep the U.S. military the most prepared and advanced in the world.

CON: The Pentagon should not be given more funds when it already wastes so much money. Military officials still have not closed down unnecessary overseas bases and restructured their armed forces to be more suitable for the post–Cold War world. The decline in military readiness is the result of an inadequately defined mission for the U.S. armed forces and the presence of too many troops in countries where they have no real business.

The two-war strategy is obsolete.

PRO: The threats to national security in the twenty-first century will be terrorism, electronic sabotage, and chemical and biological weapons—threats that a two-war strategy is not designed to confront. Therefore, the Department of Defense should reorganize to form a smaller, more agile force that could effectively confront these new scenarios. Doing so would also create substantial savings in taxpayer dollars.

CON: It is risky and unwise to drastically reduce and reorganize the nation's defense all at once. Keeping the military at its present size and structure gives the Pentagon the greatest flexibility in responding to events as they unfold. The two-war strategy protects U.S. interests around the world because it demonstrates support for allies and deters possible enemies through a show of strength.

U.S. armed forces should participate in peacekeeping missions.

PRO: The U.S. military must be prepared to fight in limited conflicts in the world's trouble spots. As the only global superpower, the United States must lead and use its strength to assist the United Nations and other multilateral efforts in dealing with civil wars and humanitarian crises worldwide. Such missions, including the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia, are in the U.S. national interest because they assert U.S. leadership and stress global cooperation.

CON: American troops should not be the "global police force." Nor should they become part of a multilateral army. Instead, the United States should maintain a military force adequate to defend its national security, and no more. Committing forces to regions of the world that are embroiled in civil war can lead to a long-term U.S. military presence in these countries and heavy American casualties. Such missions also cost money at a time when defense spending is contentious.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In recent years, many countries have become democracies. In 1999, there were 117 democratic governments, more than twice the number of democracies in the 1970s. As democracy has spread, so too have core democratic values such as human dignity and equality.

In an effort to secure the fundamental rights of every human being, world leaders have signed several agreements, including the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At the same time, some nations have continued brutal human rights violations. Recent years have produced genocide by ethnic and tribal leaders in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda and political executions in Myanmar (Burma) and China. Even democratic governments do not always respect the individual rights of their people.

For decades, policymakers in the United States have promoted democracy and human rights around the world. However, the degree to which these objectives are in America's national interest is a matter of debate. Should human rights in other countries be a top foreign policy priority of the United States? Should American leaders send troops to encourage democracy overseas? While U.S. policymakers want to promote democratic governments, they must also protect other vital interests, such as maintaining beneficial economic and diplomatic relationships.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should U.S. foreign policy focus on protecting human rights?
- Should the United States support a permanent international court to try human rights violators?
- Should the United States economically punish nations that do not practice religious tolerance?

BACKGROUND

Democracy Around the World

Democracy and U.S. Interests. The United States is the oldest continuous democracy in the world. Throughout much of the twentieth century, U.S. leaders have promoted democracy overseas. They have supported fair and free elections in other countries because they are beneficial to U.S. national interests, such as security and trade.

Because their leaders are elected by the people, democratic governments are often more politically stable than dictatorships. Such leaders often share American values and are eager to become U.S. military allies. In addition, democracies are not imperialistic; they tend to respect the national borders of other countries. Thus, the United States is safer from military attack if there are more democratic nations.

Democracies usually have free-market economies; that is, their economies are controlled by the forces of supply and demand, not by government leaders. Because the U.S. economy is so large, other free-market countries want to trade goods and services with the United States. Many economists assert that greater international trade, especially increases in U.S. exports (sales) to other countries, improves the American economy.

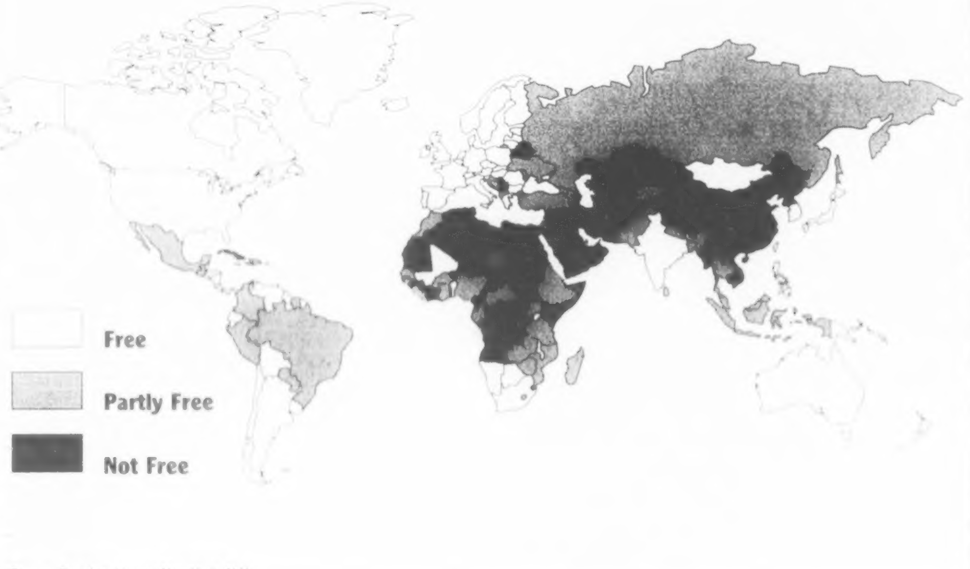
Finally, democratic nations often share American ideals. Elected officials tend to permit more individual freedoms, such as freedom of expression and religion. As these ideals take root in more countries, U.S. leaders believe that the American way of life is more secure. Therefore, U.S. officials believe it is important to support and promote democracy.

The Spread of Freedom. Although the United States was founded on principles of individual liberties, more than 150 years passed before those freedoms were granted to everyone in American society.

Only after freeing its slaves and granting suffrage to women could the United States truly be called the "Land of Liberty." Some argue that, even today, the United States needs to work on ensuring equality and freedom for all its people. Similarly, it has taken centuries for democracy to spread around the world, and even within democratic countries individuals enjoy varying degrees of freedom and equality.

Empires Collapse. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Portugal, and Spain established colonies in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. From the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century, European powers began to lose control of those colonies. (That trend began earlier in the nineteenth century for Spain's colonies in

Map of Freedom



Source: Freedom House, New York, N.Y.

In the map shown here, "free" countries have democratic elections and a broad range of individual and press freedoms. "Partly free" countries have restricted elections and personal freedoms. Those elections may be unfair or dominated by a single party, or the judicial systems may not be entirely just. Nations marked "not free" do not have elections, and individual liberties are severely limited.

Latin America.) One reason for the end of European imperialism was the high cost of maintaining and administering these territories. After World War II, the international community's support for "self-determination"—the belief that a country should have the ability to govern itself without outside control or interference—further diminished colonial power.

After gaining independence in the 1950s through the 1970s, most former colonies aligned with either the United States or the Soviet Union. These were the most tense years of the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union were vying for world influence and power. Some newly independent nations sided with the West and formed democratic governments. Examples include Botswana and Mauritius in Africa, India and Malaysia in Asia, and several Caribbean nations.

Among these democracies, however, citizens have a broad range of electoral and personal freedoms. For example, Malaysia's political system is dominated by one political party, and the Malay government restricts the freedoms of speech, press, and public assembly. Thus, democratic elections do not always lead to the same kind of freedom to which Americans are accustomed.

The Fall of the Iron Curtain. With the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, the "Iron Curtain" that separated eastern and western Europe collapsed, and so did many of the political distinctions between democratic countries in the West and communist countries in the East. Most former Soviet republics, including Russia and Ukraine, and eastern European countries, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, have held democratic elections and are converting to market economies.

The fall of the Soviet Union also had a ripple effect outside Europe. New democracies emerged in Asia (Mongolia) and Africa (Benin, South Africa, and Zambia). Today, all Latin American countries except Cuba have democratically elected governments. Once again, however, those citizens sometimes have limited electoral and personal freedoms. For example, the democratically elected president of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, suspended the constitution and imposed censorship on the press as part of an effort to fight a rebel faction in his country.

The end of the Cold War and decolonization have resulted in an unprecedented number of democracies. In 1999, there were 117 democratic governments in the world. Nevertheless, most governments in Africa and the Middle East and many in Asia still do not hold free elections or honor individual rights.

The U.S. Role in Democratization. For many years, U.S. leaders have promoted democracy in other countries. During the Cold War, American policymakers focused on containing authoritarian communist governments and supporting democracy among U.S. allies. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, U.S. interests are no longer threatened by

CORBIS/AFP

An important first step toward building democracy is holding free and fair elections. Shown here are voters lining up for the 1999 Nigerian presidential election, an event that promised to end Nigeria's era of military dictatorship. While some irregularities were reported, Nigeria's first presidential election in sixteen years was judged fair.

communism. American leaders have exerted their influence using a variety of tools, including close diplomatic ties, military alliances, trade, foreign aid, and—if necessary—military intervention.

Haiti. In some situations, American leaders have sent U.S. troops to support democracies in other countries, particularly in the Western Hemisphere. In 1994, President Bill Clinton sent American troops to Haiti to help restore that country's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to power. While U.S. forces were on the way to Haiti, its military leaders, who had seized power from Aristide in a 1991 coup, agreed to step down. American soldiers remained in the Caribbean nation until 1996 as part of a United Nations (UN) force to ensure a peaceful transition back to democracy. A newly elected president, René Préval, took office in 1996. However, when UN troops left Haiti in November 1997, its government and economy remained weak, and reports of human rights abuses continued.

Bosnia. A three-year-long war in the former Yugoslavian republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina prompted U.S. military intervention in 1995. In December of that year, President Clinton sent 20,000 U.S. troops to Bosnia as part of a 60,000-strong NATO force. Their duty was to enforce the Dayton Agreements, a U.S.-brokered peace plan. The presence of U.S., Russian, and NATO troops helped Bosnians to vote peacefully in a national election in September 1996 and in local elections in 1997. However, on-site observers think the elections were not entirely free and fair.

In addition, U.S. troops have been used to arrest accused and indicted human rights violators in Bosnia. The accused are tried before the International Criminal Tribunal—a court which was established in 1993 by the United Nations and which meets in The Hague, Netherlands. In December 1998, American and allied troops arrested General Radislav Krstic, a Bosnian Serb, on charges of genocide. Krstic will be the thirty-fifth, and highest ranking, defendant to come to trial before the tribunal.

Human Rights

What Are Human Rights? The term "human rights" incorporates a broad range of ideas that are often described in four categories. Most central are the rights that protect an individual's security. Governments should protect citizens from genocide; slavery; torture; cruel, degrading, or inhuman punishment; arbitrary arrest or imprisonment; denial of fair trial; and invasion of their homes. Human rights also encompass people's ability to secure their basic human needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. Furthermore, there are civil and political liberties, including freedom of speech, press, association, and the freedom of movement within and to and from a person's country. Finally, there are human rights laws pertaining to freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, religion, social status, and gender.

Human Rights Documents. To avoid repeating the tragedies of World War I and World War II, many of the world's leaders met in 1945 to create the United Nations. In doing so, they assessed their core values on human dignity and rights. Since then, the United Nations, many regional organizations, and individual countries have developed statements calling for the protection of the basic rights of every person.

The first global human rights documents were the UN Charter, approved in 1945, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the United Nations in 1948. A centerpiece of global human rights legislation, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is largely based on the U.S. Bill of Rights, Britain's Magna Carta, and France's Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Other important human rights documents include the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, both approved by the United Nations in 1966. These documents form the basis of international law that protects human rights in all countries that have signed them.

Human Rights Activism. As the number of democratic countries and human rights laws have grown, concern for such rights around the world has also increased. Human rights advocates have created a number of nongovernmental organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, which publicize rights violations and encourage concerned governments and individuals to pressure the offending leaders to improve their human rights records.

At one time, human rights were considered matters of internal governmental policy. Today, many foreign governments claim a legitimate right to pressure other countries about violations. Human rights have gained credibility as foreign policy issues because of improved global communications and the large increase in international trade and investment over the last thirty years.

Linking Human Rights and Trade. In recent years, the United States and China have carried on a visible conflict over human rights. U.S. officials have often criticized China's treatment of dissenters and prodemocracy activists; China believes its internal matters are not the business of the U.S. government. This conflict represents a thorny problem for American policymakers because China is a large country with a booming import-export business. The clash between U.S. business interests in China and American values of individual liberty is a classic case of competing concerns in foreign relations.

In 1989, President George Bush decided to renew a special trading privilege called "most favored nation" (MFN) trade status for China. It grants Chinese goods reduced tariffs upon entering U.S. ports. Therefore, with MFN status, Chinese goods are less expensive and thus more attractive in the American market. Human rights activists criticized this decision because it came soon after China's military attack on prodemocracy demonstrators in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

In the early 1990s, human rights organizations discovered that Chinese prison labor was being used to make goods for export to the United States. In

Human rights activists around the world have been highly critical of China's practice of arresting dissidents for trying to organize democratic opposition parties in that country. Shown here are Wei Jingsheng (left) and Xu Wenli, activists charged at different times with "plotting to subvert the government."

AP Photo/Greg Baker, file

addition, the U.S. State Department reported that China continued its unfair judicial procedures and mistreatment of political dissidents. Therefore, in 1994, President Clinton threatened to revoke China's MFN trade status unless its human rights record improved.

Chinese leaders vehemently opposed linking trade with human rights, an issue it considered a domestic matter. American business interests also opposed the link because they feared that Beijing would retaliate and cut off U.S. investment in China's growing economy. Human rights organizations supported the president's policy. However, after heated exchanges between U.S. and Chinese leaders, President Clinton softened his stance on Chinese human rights violations. He stated that the prison labor issue was resolved and that further human rights concerns would be handled separately from trade issues. Accordingly, China's MFN status was renewed in June 1994. Since then, it has been renewed every year.

Democracies and Human Rights. The violation of human rights is not limited to authoritarian governments like China's. There are many countries that hold relatively free and fair elections while restricting some fundamental democratic rights and liberties. For example, several Latin American countries had long periods of military rule between decolonization and democratization. Therefore, aspects of military rule continue in some democracies in the region. Human rights activists accuse Mexican and Brazilian police forces of human rights violations, and they say that both countries sometimes use improper judicial procedures. Rights groups claim that law enforcement officials in these countries execute people without giving them trials and illegally hold people in jail without charges.

CURRENT ISSUES

Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy. Although human rights now attract worldwide attention, many Americans disagree about whether the U.S. government should make it a central issue in its foreign policy. Protecting human rights was a priority during the presidency of Jimmy Carter. However, President Carter was criticized for emphasizing what many thought was idealism over realism in international relations—a dilemma U.S. policymakers continue to grapple with today.

Many Americans believe that freedom is a universal right of all human beings and that U.S. foreign policy must reflect values such as individual liberty, equality,

Reuters/Peter Andrews/Archive Photos

In 1997, the United States approved a $400 million program to train and equip Bosnia's mainly Muslim army (shown here). Part of the training includes instruction in the international rules of war. Policymakers hope the lessons will avert future atrocities and end the cycle of blood and vengeance.

and justice. Moreover, some observers warn that the freedoms of the United States and its allies cannot be secure in a world where freedom is threatened everywhere else. Thus, they argue that U.S. stability will be enhanced if more countries grant their citizens greater freedoms. Supporters of a foreign policy based on human rights believe the United States should condemn and take some form of action against any government that uses terror or brutality, even if it has otherwise friendly relations with the United States.

PUNISHING THE KHMER ROUGE

More than 1 million Cambodians died in the "killing fields" of their country during the 1975–79 reign of a radical communist group known as the Khmer Rouge. In the name of "agrarian reform," the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, forced millions of people out of the cities and into the countryside, where most were worked or starved to death. Yet, twenty years after being driven from power, no Khmer Rouge leaders have been punished. In 1998, Pol Pot died and several of his top aides came forward to ask for forgiveness. However, many Cambodians were not willing to "forgive and forget" and—with support from the United States and other nations—have demanded that Khmer Rouge leaders be put on trial before an international tribunal.

Critics of this approach say the United States should not pursue policies based primarily on morality. They contend that U.S. leaders have to be pragmatic and work with all economically and militarily powerful countries, placing practical issues, such as trade and security, ahead of human rights. For example, many think the United States cannot afford to be too critical of China's human rights policies because Chinese leaders, if pushed too hard, could threaten U.S. allies in Asia with military action and restrict U.S. access to China's lucrative market. Furthermore, many experts believe that if American leaders pressure an ally with a less-than-perfect human rights record to dismantle its leadership, an even more repressive government could take over. Critics claim that the United States has a stronger national interest in building beneficial economic relationships than in forcing countries to become democratic and that these strong economic ties will eventually bring about democratic change.

Trying Human Rights Violators. At the end of World War II, war criminals were brought to trial in courts or tribunals established by international agreements. Nazi leaders stood before judges from the victorious nations—including the United States—at Nuremberg, Germany, to answer charges of committing genocide and

National Archives

In 1945 and 1946, judges from the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and France convicted nineteen Nazi political and military leaders of crimes against humanity, including the murder of 6 million Jews and 5 million other Europeans. Twelve were executed and the others received long prison sentences. Shown above are Nazi defendants at the Nuremberg tribunal.

crimes against humanity. Similar trials were held in Tokyo from 1946 to 1949 to judge accused Japanese war criminals. In 1993, the UN Security Council established an International Criminal Tribunal to prosecute those responsible for ethnic cleansing and war crimes in the civil wars fought in the former Yugoslavia. The next year, the council established a similar tribunal to prosecute high-level officials responsible for the genocide in Rwanda. Both tribunals have met with limited success; their biggest complaint being the lack of cooperation from the nations involved and at times even from Security Council member states who have not fully supported the court's efforts. The United States—while not always eager to use its troops to arrest war criminals in Bosnia—has generally encouraged the courts to proceed.

However, in 1998 the United States did not support the treaty drawn up at a meeting of 153 nations in Rome, establishing a permanent International Criminal Court. This court was established to prosecute crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes, and aggression in international and internal conflicts. The United States and several other major powers fear that smaller countries could gain too much power on the court, thereby bypassing the influence of the world's strongest nations—some of which are members of the UN Security Council. Many Americans also fear the loss of national sovereignty to the decisions of an international tribunal—an issue often raised by those who believe the United States should not be forced to comply with decisions made by international bodies like the United Nations or the World Trade Organization. For example, champions of U.S. sovereignty do not want U.S. troops being called into a foreign country to enforce what may be a dangerous and expensive mission mandated by an international court.

Advocates of the permanent court say that without the support of the United States and other strong nations, the tribunal will not be successful. They contend that the United States has an obligation to the rest of the world to help bring war criminals and human rights violators to justice if it is going to continue to take the lead in negotiating peace settlements and participating in peacekeeping missions abroad.

PINOCHET: AN ARRESTED DICTATOR

AP Photo/Santiago Llanquin

General Augusto Pinochet was arrested by British authorities when the former president of Chile came to London for back surgery in October 1998. The arrest warrant came from a Spanish judge who asked Britain to extradite the former dictator to Spain to stand trial for crimes against Spanish citizens living in Chile. Pinochet relinquished power in 1990 to a democratically elected president, but thousands of Chileans remember the brutality of his regime, which murdered more than 3,000 civilians. While Great Britain has allowed Pinochet's extradition on two of the original thirty-two charges, it may be years before Pinochet exhausts all his appeal options.

Supporters also point out that U.S. sovereignty has not been threatened in the past by international tribunals like those at Nuremberg or The Hague; therefore, American officials have no reason to fear that happening if the permanent court is established.

Promoting Worldwide Religious Freedom. Americans take for granted their freedom of religion; they can worship in any way they desire—or not at all. But such is not the case in other parts of the world: Communist countries have commonly worked to stamp out any traces of religion; Christian converts in Saudi Arabia are beheaded; Christian denominations such as Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists have been officially singled out in Russia and other European nations. Many Americans think the U.S. government should do all it can to protect religious minorities overseas.

CORBIS/Alison Wright

China's army invaded Tibet in 1949, and China formally annexed it in 1951. As a result, many Tibetan Buddhists, including their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama (pictured here, blessing a follower), fled the country. Tibetans claim their country is a sovereign nation and that China is mistreating them because of their religion. The Chinese government believes that Tibet is a historical part of China and rightfully belongs under its jurisdiction.

In October 1998, Congress passed, and President Clinton signed, a bill called the International Religious Freedom Act, which calls for the United States to take official action against countries that persecute religious minorities. A new office in the State Department will monitor religious persecution around the world and report wrongdoing to Congress. The administration will then be required to punish guilty nations in ways ranging from protest statements to cutting off economic assistance or imposing economic sanctions, depending on the severity of the violation.

Supporters of the law, which included some American Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, and human rights groups, argued that the United States should take the lead in promoting religious tolerance around the world. They contend that as the world's richest and most influential economic power—as well as one that values and promotes religious freedom at home—the United States is in a position to do a great deal about the mistreatment of religious minorities.

They believe that it is in the interest of the American people for the U.S. government to do whatever it can to teach and, if necessary, to enforce religious tolerance in other nations.

Opponents of the International Religious Freedom Act, while denouncing religious persecution, object to the new bureaucracy created by the law and the mechanism established to execute it. Critics say the law is vague in defining levels of violation and what actions the administration is supposed to take in response to violations. Some think the economic sanctions and withholding of trade might, in fact, cause some countries to seek retribution against the very people the law is supposed to protect.

OUTLOOK

For decades, American policymakers have promoted democracy, but today's human rights abuses remind them that a viable democracy should honor individual liberties—not just allow democratic elections. In addition, those governments must have fair judicial procedures. The dilemma for U.S. policymakers is that protecting human rights does not always coincide with promoting other interests, such as trade. While many American leaders remain committed to the ideals upon which their country was founded, they also believe that they must balance those ideals with present-day realities, such as economic interdependence and national security.

THE DEBATE: DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

U.S. foreign policy should focus on protecting human rights.

PRO: The United States was founded on principles of liberty, equality, and justice; those values should guide its foreign policy. To gain the support of the American people, U.S. foreign policy must also reflect their most deeply held beliefs. When foreign countries abuse the rights of their citizens, the world is not safe for other democratic countries. Similarly, when more people in more countries gain additional freedoms, the United States will be more secure.

CON: Morality alone cannot drive today's complex international relations. There are many issues besides human rights that policymakers must consider, such as trade and national security. If the United States pushes its undemocratic allies toward freedom too quickly, a more repressive government could take over. In addition, by maintaining good relations with undemocratic allies, the United States might be able to persuade leaders to give their citizens more freedom.

The United States should support a permanent international court to try human rights violators.

PRO: The new International Criminal Court needs the support of the United States to be effective. If the United States is going to assume a leading role in peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts, it has an obligation to help bring human rights violators and war criminals to justice. America's fears of such a court threatening its sovereignty are unfounded; earlier war crimes courts did not threaten U.S. sovereignty. Why would this one?

CON: A permanent court could fall into the wrong hands—namely small countries whose judges could possibly indict a U.S. Army officer who had to lead peacekeeping troops in a military action. The United States must be assured that any permanent world court will remain in control of UN Security Council members. Otherwise, a decision from such a body could override U.S. sovereignty.

The United States should economically punish nations that do not practice religious tolerance.

PRO: The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 is a sound law that will convince nations around the world to treat their religious minorities humanely and fairly. No one should be mistreated for their religious beliefs, and the United States—the strongest economic power in the world—is in a perfect position to force guilty countries to change by withholding aid or imposing economic sanctions.

CON: The new religious freedom law is not the way to convince nations to treat their religious minorities fairly. The law creates a whole new bureaucracy; its requirements are vague and its punishments uncertain. The U.S. government should look for ways to improve religious freedom around the world, but the International Religious Freedom Act is not going to accomplish the task.

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Millions of Americans first became concerned about the environment in the 1960s and 1970s. Pollution was causing health problems, killing fish and wildlife, and making the air in American cities unhealthy. Congress responded by passing laws to clean up polluted lakes and rivers, improve air quality, and protect plant and animal species.

During the 1980s, Americans recognized that protecting the air and water were also global concerns, and they began to look at environmental problems beyond U.S. borders. Scientists discovered that pollution in one country could affect the environment in neighboring countries—indeed, around the world. They also discovered that certain chemicals were destroying Earth's protective ozone layer, allowing dangerous ultraviolet rays from the sun to penetrate the planet's atmosphere. Experts warned that carbon dioxide released from factory smokestacks and cars might be causing Earth's temperature to rise. This "greenhouse effect" could cause unusual climate patterns including coastal flooding and drought.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States ratify the Kyoto global warming treaty?
- Should world nations build more nuclear power plants?
- Should Congress reauthorize the Endangered Species Act?

In the past twenty years, environmentalists have argued that environmental problems demand strong and decisive international solutions. Most nations have cooperated in negotiating treaties to protect Earth. However, critics contend that these treaties have hindered both domestic and international economies and are often based on conflicting scientific evidence. As countries around the world develop their economies, the debate over how to reduce the effects of economic expansion on the environment continues.

BACKGROUND

Dangers to the Environment

Environmentalists are concerned with issues ranging from pesticide use to rising global temperatures. Many problems stem from local environmental abuses, such as factories and farms that release hazardous materials into nearby streams, thereby harming wildlife and threatening the health of the people who use those waterways for food, drinking water, and irrigation. Local environmental issues can quickly become worldwide concerns as rivers cross borders and polluted air drifts into the atmosphere. Environmentalists encourage people to "think globally, act locally"—to tackle problems at their source and thus avoid global disasters. Others insist that solutions to environmental problems must be economically, as well as environmentally, sound.

Global Warming. During the twentieth century, the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has risen

Greenpeace/Beltra

According to environmentalists, global warming has caused Alaska's Bering Glacier to shrink about forty feet during the twentieth century. Melting glaciers may cause sea levels to rise, contributing to extreme weather conditions. Skeptics argue that the sea level has not changed in the 1900s and that the ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland are actually growing.

dramatically, causing what some call a "greenhouse effect." Sources of excess carbon dioxide include emissions from automobiles, factories, and power plants that are powered by fossil fuels like coal and oil. Many scientists believe that a layer of carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases" traps the sun's heat like glass in a greenhouse, thereby raising the temperature of the atmosphere and perhaps leading to serious environmental problems.

According to scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), temperatures just a few degrees higher than normal would partially melt polar ice caps and flood coastal areas, turn productive farmland into desert, and alter weather patterns around the world. Some experts predict that by 2100 world temperatures could increase by three or four degrees Fahrenheit.

The decade of the 1990s was the warmest on record. Despite a slight cooling in 1992 and 1993, global temperatures have increased since 1994. By the mid-1990s, scientists had developed computer models that could replicate and explain temperature changes around the world. These models have convinced many scientists that human activities have contributed to global warming. However, scientists disagree on how warm the planet will eventually get and what the consequences will be.

Ozone Depletion. Ozone is a thin protective layer of specialized oxygen molecules in Earth's atmosphere that shields the planet from the dangerous ultraviolet rays of the sun. Research has shown that increased exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun weakens the human body's immune system, causes skin cancer and eye damage, and destroys crops and microorganisms. Scientists at the United Nations Environment Program have been concerned about damage to the ozone layer since the 1970s. In 1985, a study by the British Antarctic Survey revealed that depletion of ozone over Antarctica had left a hole in the ozone layer at certain times of the year. In 1998, the hole stretched

AP Photo/Saurabh Das

Many scientists believe that overpopulation threatens the environment because of increased energy demands, limited fresh water supplies, and the loss of natural habitats and forests to development. Experts believe that the world's population, now around 6 billion, will be about 8.5 billion by 2050. Shown here is a street in New Delhi, India.

for 10.5 million square miles, nearly one-third larger than it had been in 1997.

Scientists believe that man-made chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) destroy Earth's ozone layer. CFCs were commonly used in cleaning solvents, as propellants in aerosol spray cans, and as coolants in refrigerators and air conditioners. In 1989, under the Montreal Protocol, forty-six countries, including the United States, agreed to eliminate the use of these chemicals. Since then, the number of CFCs in the atmosphere has started decreasing, but scientists believe it could be well into the twenty-first century before the ozone layer begins to mend.

Acid Rain. In the northeastern region of the United States and in Canada, as well as in many parts of Europe and Asia, air pollution has led to highly acidic rainfall. Although the causes of acid rain are disputed, most scientists believe that it results from the transformation of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide (released by power plants, factories, and automobiles) into sulfates and nitrates. When combined with moisture in the air, sulfates and nitrates become acids and fall to Earth as acid rain. Acid rain increases the acidity of soil, streams, and lakes, making them less habitable for plants and animals. U.S. law now requires electrical utilities to reduce the total levels of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide that they release by more than 10 million tons by the year 2000.

Nuclear Waste. The radioactive fuel used in nuclear power plants creates nuclear waste, as does the production and disarmament of nuclear weapons. These nuclear materials are generally highly toxic and take thousands of years to lose radioactivity. Safely disposing of nuclear waste is a serious problem. If it is buried in cans, the cans might someday leak radioactive material into the soil and the water table. Dumping nuclear waste containers in the

Widespread desire to reduce "greenhouse" gas emissions has promoted interest in alternative natural energy sources. Here, a field of windmills uses the wind to generate electricity.

R. Norman Matheny/Christian Science Monitor ocean presents a similar problem. Although experts have developed disposal technology, there are no guarantees that nuclear waste will never pollute the environment. Today, highly radioactive nuclear waste remains in temporary storage awaiting the construction of permanent depositories.

In 1998, the federal government announced plans to proceed with the investigation of a possible nuclear waste site in Nevada's Yucca Mountain. However, some scientists have expressed concern over the geological stability of the location and about the possibility of eventual radioactive contamination of underground water.

Major Environmental Treaties

Beginning with conventions, or agreements, on protecting nature and preserving wildlife in the 1940s, world leaders have met over the years to negotiate international treaties addressing a wide variety of environmental problems. While governments have realized that global cooperation is necessary to protect Earth, some countries seem better equipped than others to make changes that benefit the environment. Wealthy nations can better afford to develop new, environmentally safe technologies. In recent years, world leaders have struggled to construct international laws that place equal responsibility on all countries without stifling economic growth in developing nations.

The Montreal Protocol. In the 1980s, worldwide concern about the growing hole in the ozone layer prompted leaders from many nations to meet and discuss ways to repair the damage. In 1985, the United Nations (UN) committed to protecting the ozone. On January 1, 1989, the leaders of forty-six nations signed the United Nations Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The signers agreed to reduce, and eventually eliminate, the use of ozone-depleting chemicals in their countries.

The Montreal Protocol had to be flexible if it was to accommodate the needs of both industrialized countries and developing nations. Therefore, the agreement was written so that it could be amended easily as new scientific research emerged. By 1998, 161 nations had agreed to conform to its standards.

The Earth Summit. In 1992, world leaders met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to attend the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the largest environmental conference in history. At the "Earth Summit," participants signed agreements on three important environmental issues: biological diversity, climate change, and sustainable development.

First, the Convention on Biological Diversity obligated the signing governments to protect plants and animals. The convention stressed the importance of preserving species that are useful to humans so they will continue to be available. It also emphasized the right of individual nations to determine which species were most important to their environments and economies.

Second, the Convention on Climate Change concentrated on stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions. The convention stated that the absence of full scientific evidence of global warming theories should not be reason to postpone reducing emissions. It built on the goals of the Montreal Protocol by targeting gases not controlled by the earlier treaty and by urging developed countries such as the United States to take the lead in combating climate change. Similar to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Climate Change recognized the right of individual nations to develop their own plans for reducing emissions.

Third, Earth Summit participants accepted a set of guidelines, known as Agenda 21, that set goals for sustainable development—economic and industrial growth that both meets the needs of the growing population and protects nature's ability to renew itself. Agenda 21 resulted in the development of a global network of organizations committed to researching

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Almost thirty years after the first Earth Day celebration, environmental education has become common in American classrooms. More than thirty states require schools to explain environmental issues to students at every grade level. Environmentalists are pleased because children who are taught about conservation and recycling in the classroom are likely to take action in the community. Critics argue that what is being taught is environmental advocacy, not straight science.

and resolving conflicts in economic development and environmental preservation.

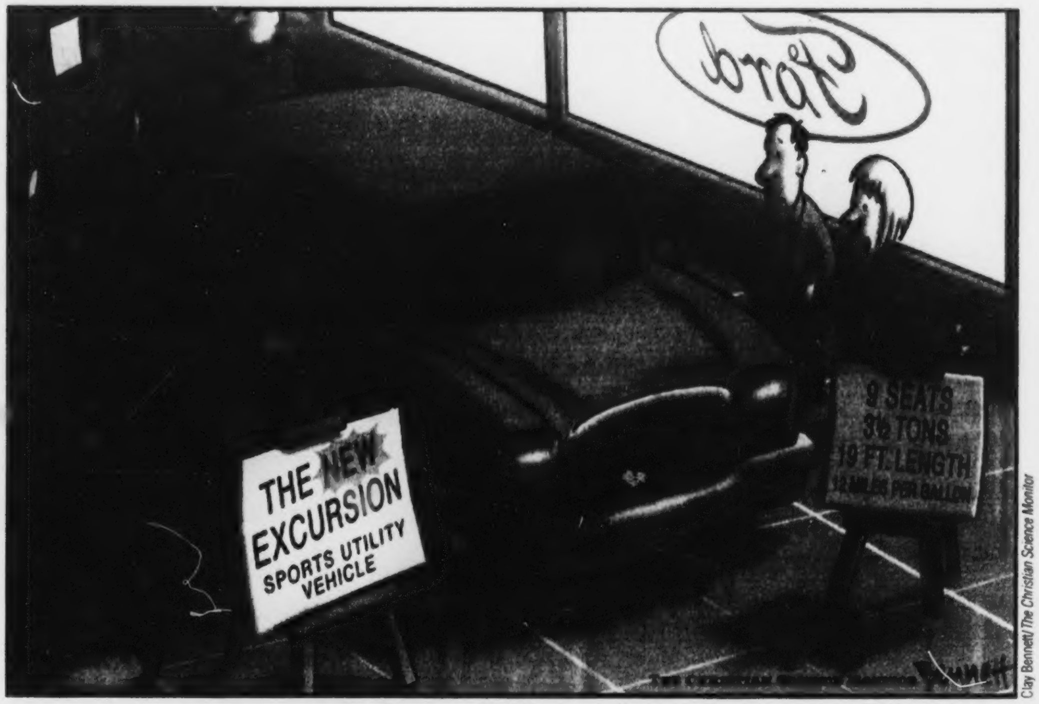
Five years later, in 1997, world leaders reconvened in New York for Earth Summit II to evaluate their progress. Although many countries had tried to develop special policies, establish protected areas, and monitor emissions, worldwide environmental practices generally had not improved very much.

Some environmentalists claimed that the conventions of the Earth Summit were too weak. Many said that the problem was not with the agreements but with the absence of enforcement mechanisms. Other critics cited the lack of technology available for developing new manufacturing processes that would lessen further damage to the environment.

The Kyoto Protocol. In December 1997, more than 160 nations met in Kyoto, Japan, and negotiated a legally binding, internationally enforceable protocol to the 1992 Convention on Climate Change. The Kyoto Protocol states specific goals for individual nations. Under the new treaty, thirty-eight industrialized countries, including the United States, would be required to lower emissions of six ozone-damaging greenhouse gases by 2012. On average, nations would reduce emission levels by 5 percent. However, the Kyoto Protocol does provide countries with some flexibility in the form of "offshore" reductions. Under this provision, countries that cannot meet their own emission goals can make a deal to "buy" the excess reductions of nations that are doing better than required. The protocol also addressed developing nations, such as China and India, that are major producers of greenhouse gases. These countries would be asked to set voluntary reduction targets.

ROAD HOGS OR ADVENTURERS?

In 1999, the Ford Motor Company introduced the ultimate sport utility vehicle (SUV)—the nineteen-foot-long, three-ton, six-foot-high Ford Excursion. The demand for this class of large, high-powered, and expensive four-wheel drive vehicles grew throughout the 1990s. Popular among "off-road" enthusiasts as well as suburban families, SUVs are not without their critics. Many environmentalists charge that most models are "road hogs," consuming almost twice the amount of gasoline regular cars require and emitting too much carbon dioxide into the environment.



Clay Bennett/The Christian Science Monitor

'...At Ford quantity is job one...'

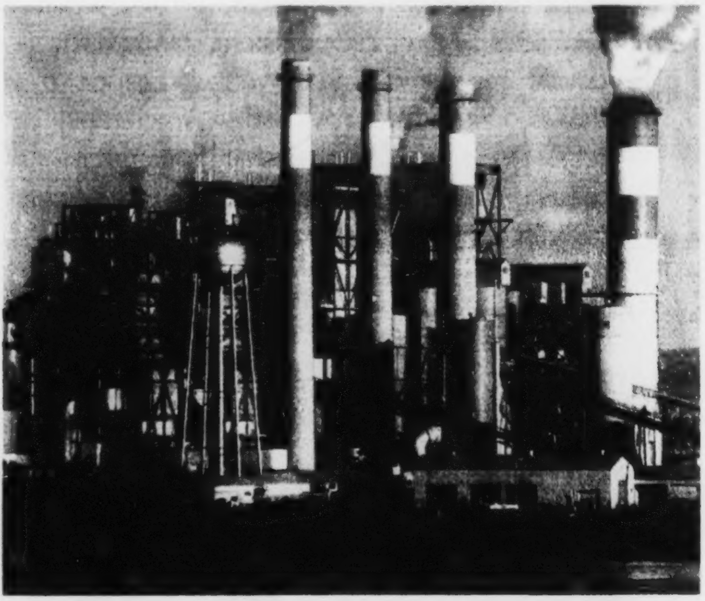
The Kyoto Protocol has not yet taken effect. The document was opened for signatures in March 1998 and remained open for one year. The treaty will be implemented once it has been ratified by fifty-five nations who contribute at least 55 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. It will legally bind individual countries only after it has been ratified by their governments.

In November 1998, world representatives met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to create a protocol compliance plan, which set rules for enforcing the pact and established penalties for countries that fail to comply. At this time, President Clinton instructed U.S. delegates to sign the Kyoto Protocol, but it must still be ratified by the Senate before it takes effect.

CURRENT ISSUES

The United States and the Kyoto Protocol. The 1997 Kyoto Protocol requires all industrialized nations to reduce their production of greenhouse gases significantly, thereby changing their industrial methods and perhaps their citizens' ways of life. While many European nations seem committed to the protocol, the United States has been a dissenting voice. President Bill Clinton supports the treaty's objectives. However, the U.S. Senate, which must ratify all treaties, has been heavily lobbied by oil, coal, and auto industry leaders against approving the Kyoto Protocol. These industries have traditionally opposed the treaty because it does not require developing nations to cut back their emissions as heavily as the industrialized nations must. Recently, however, several major oil companies have announced that they are considering voluntary compliance with emissions reductions.

Some environmentalists believe that the Kyoto Protocol will never go into effect if the United States refuses to ratify it. The treaty requires signatures from developed countries whose combined emissions total at least 55 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. The United States alone is responsible for 38 percent of the industrialized world's emissions; therefore, it is unlikely that the treaty could ever be enacted without U.S. approval.



EPA-DOCUMERICA-Boyd Norton

Factories that burn fossil fuels, such as this one, emit a mix of chemicals into the atmosphere, among them carbon dioxide. Some scientists have theorized that a buildup of carbon dioxide in Earth's atmosphere could cause global warming.

Supporters of the treaty claim it is too early to insist that developing nations commit to the same emissions standards as industrialized nations. First, they say, industrialized countries need to take meaningful steps to reduce their own emissions. Environmentalists point out that after the Montreal Protocol, when industrialized countries first developed cost-effective ways of reducing ozone-depleting emissions, emerging nations were quick to acquire the new technologies. Furthermore, proponents believe that enacting the Kyoto Protocol would touch off a new wave of technological innovations. They say that thousands of jobs would be created in the push to develop "green" industrial methods.

On the other hand, critics of the Kyoto Protocol say that the cost of developing and implementing new technologies would be prohibitive not only for industries but also for individual citizens. Some experts project that much of the economic burden of reducing emissions would be felt at the household level in the form of increased energy bills, higher gasoline prices, and rising costs of manufactured goods. Big industries, they insist, would take advantage of lax emissions standards in developing nations and move their factories to those countries, thereby costing Americans jobs. Opponents maintain that if emerging industrial nations are not required to participate fully in cutbacks, then worldwide emissions will not be reduced at all, only shifted from developed to developing countries.

Too Few Fish

Even though the world's catch of fish has quadrupled in the past fifty years, producing 93 million tons in 1996, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization predicts that global demand will increase to 115 million tons by 2010, owing to population growth. Some are concerned that there will not be enough fish to meet such a need, since many of the world's fishing grounds have already reached maximum productivity levels and have begun to decline. A strong—and growing—international fish trade has contributed to this problem, with much of the fish going from developing countries to wealthy ones. The world's top three exporters of fish are Thailand, the United States, and Norway.

Nuclear Energy. Based on current rates of population growth and industrial expansion, experts believe that the world's demand for energy will increase by 50 percent in the next twenty-five years. Recent concern about global warming has prompted world leaders to consider energy sources that do not send pollutants into the atmosphere. For decades, nuclear power has been a source of clean energy. Some scientists, believing that nuclear power is safer for the environment, now suggest building more nuclear reactors to replace coal-fired power plants that produce emissions.

Critics say nuclear energy is too dangerous. They cite accidents at nuclear power plants at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania (1979) and Chernobyl in the former Soviet Union (1986) as evidence that nuclear power is unsafe. At Three Mile Island, severe environmental damage was avoided because the reactor was equipped with a containment facility that kept radioactive materials from being released. However, the power plant is now thoroughly contaminated; no one can go near it, and it cannot be destroyed. At Chernobyl, no containment facility existed. The reactor exploded, spreading radioactive fallout for miles, making the land around it uninhabitable, and contributing to rising cancer rates in much of Europe. Opponents of nuclear energy contend that, despite safety precautions, accidents like these could happen again. They insist that new nuclear reactors not be built. Some even believe that existing nuclear power plants should be closed down and dismantled.

Advocates of nuclear energy point out that approximately 400 nuclear power plants have been operating around the world for a combined total of more than 6,000 years. Only once, in Chernobyl, has there been an accident that caused public harm or environmental damage. In the event of a malfunction, the Chernobyl reactor had no means of preventing radioactive material from being released into the atmosphere. Since then, other reactors like the one in Chernobyl have been modified to prevent similar accidents. According to industry leaders, nuclear energy is not only safe but environmentally friendly because nuclear reactors do not burn anything and therefore release no carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Increased reliance on nuclear energy, advocates say, could reverse the global warming trend.

The Politics of Conservation. In 1998 the World Conservation Union released some disturbing findings about the status of the Earth's plants: Globally, one in eight species is threatened with extinction. While the study also determined that a majority of species are secure, the results have been cause for concern for many conservationists around the world.

According to experts, much of Earth's biodiversity is contained in a small number of "megadiverse" countries, most of which have developing economies. Often, these nations are the least equipped to prevent plant or animal extinction because they lack sophisticated technology, ecological awareness, and money. Many conservationists are now searching for ways to work with local peoples and cultures to protect the environment and create development opportunities at the same time.

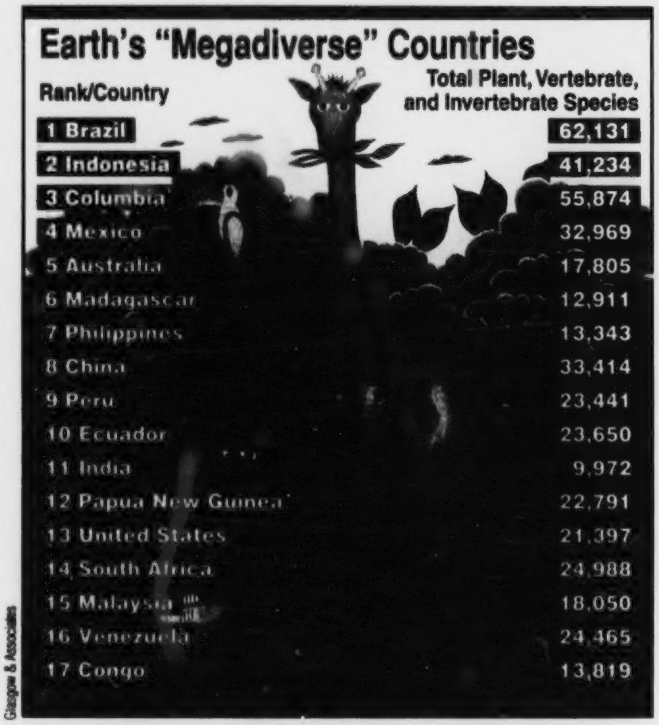
The United States—one of the seventeen "megadiverse" countries—has been trying for many years to combat the problem of species extinction. In 1973, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with an overwhelming bipartisan majority. The

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Marvina Munch

In March 1999, the federal government ordered new protections for nine threatened salmon populations in the Pacific Northwest. These salmon, long considered regional icons, are threatened by years of economic growth and development. Saving these species will involve massive efforts and affect the lives of many of the residents of Washington and Oregon.

legislation was intended to identify and protect troubled plant and animal populations in the United States by regulating human activity that could lead to extinction. The initial list of 109 species has grown to more than 1,000, with about 30 that have been recovered or "delisted."

After twenty-seven years, the ESA is overdue for congressional reauthorization. The law is controversial in the business community and among many lawmakers because its regulations sometimes restrict economic development. Before many development plans can proceed, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must conduct studies—often time-consuming and costly—to see if the project will harm certain species.



Earth's "Megadiverse" Countries

Rank/Country	Total Plant, Vertebrate, and Invertebrate Species
1 Brazil	62,131
2 Indonesia	41,234
3 Columbia	55,874
4 Mexico	32,969
5 Australia	17,805
6 Madagascar	12,911
7 Philippines	13,343
8 China	33,414
9 Peru	23,441
10 Ecuador	23,650
11 India	9,972
12 Papua New Guinea	22,791
13 United States	21,397
14 South Africa	24,988
15 Malaysia	18,050
16 Venezuela	24,465
17 Congo	13,819

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According to recent studies, more than two-thirds of the world's biodiversity is contained in just seventeen countries spread over five continents. Fifteen of these "megadiverse" nations have developing economies, presenting conservationists with problems—and opportunities.

Opponents of the Endangered Species Act argue that the law must be eliminated or greatly revamped to protect private property rights. They contend that only a handful of species have been "delisted" in the twenty-seven years of the ESA and that most of these either should never have been on the list or recovered for other reasons. Many critics believe that the ESA amounts to "federal land-use planning" and violates private property rights by inflicting millions of dollars of costs on potential developers. Worse still, the lack of incentives and the bureaucratic administration of the act discourage voluntary conservation.

Those who support reauthorizing the Endangered Species Act insist that it has saved numerous species—such as the American bald eagle—from certain extinction, and that more than half of the current listed species are making "comebacks." Conservation biologists argue that there are certain "keystone" species whose extinction could greatly damage the global ecosystem, including threatening human life. Because no one knows exactly which are the crucial species, adequate caution must be taken to prevent the extinction of any of them. Besides, supporters say, stories of development plans that were ruined because of ESA regulations are often exaggerated by people who are more concerned about personal profit than environmental protection.

OUTLOOK

Virtually every American wants clean water and air, the maintenance of natural ecosystems, and the preservation of Earth's atmosphere—but many only want this at a limited cost. The American public is sometimes reluctant to agree to international laws that might limit business or raise prices of consumer goods in the United States. Consequently, the global campaign for stricter environmental standards has faced strong opposition. Some Americans think that many environmental regulations are unnecessary, reduce productivity and jobs, and often do not accomplish what they set out to do. However, dangers to the environment—both at home and abroad—still exist. In deciding whether to support international laws, the American public and government must balance the potential harm to the environment with the economic benefits of fewer international standards.

THE DEBATE: THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

The United States should ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

PRO: The United States should drop its objections to lesser emissions standards for developing countries and ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Acceptance of the treaty would push industries to develop environmentally friendly technologies, thereby creating thousands of new jobs. Once the technology becomes available, developing countries will soon fall in line.

CON: The United States should not agree to bear more than its share of the burden in reducing global warming. Developing "green" technologies would cost more than most industries could afford to pay. Furthermore, big industries might move their operations to countries with looser emissions standards. Emissions would not be reduced after all, just shifted from industrialized to emerging nations.

World nations should build more nuclear power plants.

PRO: The public is unnecessarily nervous about nuclear energy. Despite thousands of years' worth of combined use, nuclear power generators have caused environmental damage only once. Since then, nuclear reactors have been modified so similar accidents can be avoided. In addition, nuclear power is cleaner than energy sources that burn fossil fuels, making it a good alternative in the fight against global warming.

CON: The accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl proved that nuclear reactors are dangerous. The reactor at Three Mile Island is now useless and highly poisonous. The Chernobyl disaster has made the surrounding countryside uninhabitable and has increased cancer rates across Europe. More nuclear reactors should not be built. In fact, the nuclear power plants now in operation should be shut down and disassembled.

Congress should reauthorize the Endangered Species Act.

PRO: The Endangered Species Act has saved many important species from extinction and protected many others from the threat of extinction. The loss of "keystone" species could be tremendously harmful, even to human life around the world. The ESA attempts to ensure that development plans are friendly to the environment. Horror stories about ESA studies and regulations are exaggerated and motivated by profit.

CON: The Endangered Species Act has violated citizens' private property rights and failed to protect more than a handful of species. As is, the ESA legislation amounts to federal land-use planning. The environmental-effects studies required by the ESA cost developers and citizens millions of dollars and are often useless or unwarranted. Besides, the legislation discourages voluntary conservation efforts by private landowners.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Trade is a cornerstone of international relations. The end of the Cold War opened the way for increased cooperation among nations, thus creating new economic partnerships.

Trading goods and services with other nations is vital to the U.S. economy. Many members of Congress and most economists believe that free and open trade is the key to a prosperous global economy. Free-trade advocates supported congressional approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994.

However, many Americans think that the United States should not engage in free trade with nations that abuse human rights, pollute the environment, or put U.S. goods at a disadvantage in their marketplaces. Some experts argue that new free-trade agreements have increased the U.S. trade deficit—the amount by which the country's imports exceed its exports. Some Americans support a protectionist policy of imposing tariffs (taxes on imports) and quotas on foreign goods to reduce imports and protect jobs in the United States. By contrast, free-trade proponents say protectionism will harm both the U.S. and global economies.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Is free trade harming the U.S. economy?
- Should Congress renew "fast track" negotiating authority?
- Should the U.S. government try to manage trade?

In the late 1990s, as many nations struggled through recession, some leaders considered buoying their economies by limiting international trade. In the United States, critics said that the high trade deficit proved that free trade was not working, even though other economic indicators were strong. Nevertheless, the U.S. government urged world leaders not to resort to tariffs and quotas, tools it argued would hurt national and global economies.

BACKGROUND

Trading with the World

Why Do Nations Trade? When a country tries to produce most of the goods and services its people require, its economy grows at a slow rate. Faster economic growth takes place when a country exports its most plentiful or most easily produced goods to other nations and imports goods that other nations can more easily produce. Most countries have a particular strength or comparative advantage—such as natural resources, climate, skilled labor, or technical superiority—that enables them to make certain products at a lower cost than other countries. Comparative advantage allows each country to profit by trading the goods it makes most efficiently for goods other countries are better able to make.

For example, in the nineteenth century, Great Britain, with its factories, was the world's most efficient manufacturer of textiles, while Portugal, with its ideal climate and fertile soil, produced fine wines. By concentrating resources on what each did best and by exchanging these products, the two countries had all the wine and textiles they needed, plus money left over to make or buy other goods. In this way, trade boosts a country's standard of living.

Protectionism. Free trade, or trade without restrictions, has been rare in the world marketplace throughout most of the twentieth century. Most countries adopt at least some protectionist measures such as tariffs and quotas to protect certain industries or to encourage consumers to buy domestic goods. Tariffs are taxes on imports that increase the price of foreign-made products. Quotas limit the amount of specific products that can be imported. Ideally, these trade barriers, which are measures enacted to protect jobs in newly formed or struggling industries, are temporary.

American investment in a foreign country can lead to greater U.S. exports to that nation. Here, Japanese consumers test a new American-made car near Tokyo.

AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi

Most economists agree that trade barriers result in higher prices for domestic products because domestic companies no longer need to keep prices low to compete with foreign imports. If consumers have to spend more money on one product, they have less to spend on other products. This trend can lead to unemployment in other domestic industries.

Protectionist measures are risky because the economies of the world are interconnected, or interdependent. If nations set up trade barriers, an escalating series of retaliatory tariffs and quotas—a trade war—could result, possibly leading to economic problems in many countries.

Trade Wars and the Great Depression. The last major trade war occurred in the 1930s. Many historians blame the U.S. Congress, which passed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act in 1930, for much of the problem. This act greatly increased tariffs on all goods imported into the United States. Other nations retaliated by raising tariffs on American goods. Prices increased for almost everything bought and sold around the world. International demand for foreign-made products plummeted because of the high prices, causing entire industries to shut down. The trade wars of the 1930s thus deepened the effects of the Great Depression.

American Trade Policy

U.S. Trade Leadership After World War II. Following World War II, the United States provided economic and technical assistance to Europe and Japan and encouraged the nations of western Europe to coordinate their trade policies. In 1957, six nations in western Europe created the European Economic Community (or EC, for European Community). The EC abolished import restrictions between member countries and established some common terms for marketing their products outside Europe. With the passage of the Treaty on European Union in 1993, the EC changed its name to the European Union (EU).

In the postwar world, U.S. companies increased international trade by selling their goods and opening factories overseas, especially in Latin America, parts of Europe, and the Middle East. By expanding factories overseas, these multinational corporations took advantage of lower labor costs and created new markets for American consumer goods. The new factories provided foreign workers with jobs and therefore the money with which to buy U.S. products.

Encouraging International Trade. During the 1940s, leaders of the international community negotiated two agreements to encourage world trade.

Bretton Woods. Because each country has a different form of currency, international trade can be complicated. When nations buy and sell goods and services from one another, they need to know how much their money is worth in another nation. For example, how many French francs would 100 U.S. dollars be worth? Exchange rates determine the value of one country's currency in another country. If a country has a favorable exchange rate with the United States, U.S. dollars will be worth more (will buy more goods) in that country than if the exchange rate were unfavorable. In 1944, representatives from forty-four Western nations met at Bretton Woods, New

Currency exchange rates change daily in part because of variations in the strength of each nation's economy and political system.

Great Britain GBP

Close Up Foundation/Renée Bouchard

Hampshire, to establish a fair way of determining worldwide exchange rates.

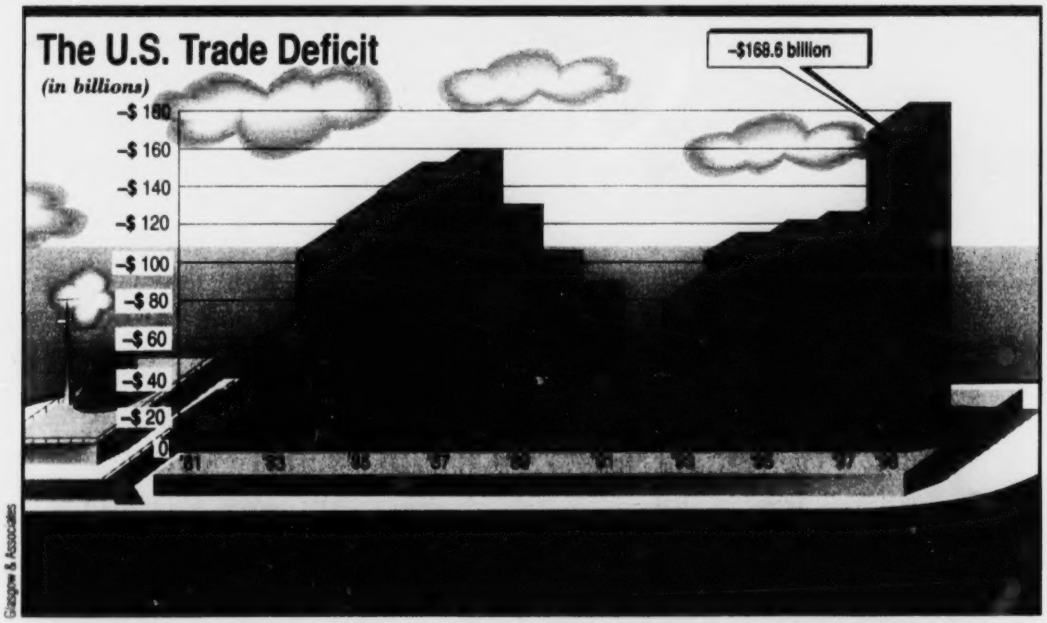
Under the Bretton Woods system, exchange rates between foreign currencies were fixed against the value of the American dollar. The system worked well at first because the U.S. economy was much stronger than any others. However, after a few years, the economies of other nations grew and the relative value of the U.S. dollar went down, throwing the Bretton Woods system out of balance. Therefore, in 1971, the system was reformed into a floating exchange system, whereby the values of currencies relative to one another are free to change daily. In a floating exchange system, the value of a nation's currency reflects the health of its economy.

GATT. In 1947, twenty-three noncommunist nations signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, establishing a code of conduct for trading countries. Under the provisions of GATT, a growing number of nations have sought to increase world trade by reducing tariffs and other barriers.

In 1993, 123 nations took part in GATT talks. Meetings of GATT members provide a continuing international forum for nations to discuss trade issues. These meetings, called "rounds," have produced important trade agreements. The Kennedy Round (1967) and the Tokyo Round (1979), for example, resulted in substantial worldwide tariff reductions. In 1993, after seven years of negotiations in the Uruguay Round, GATT members approved a sweeping new trade accord that eliminated import tariffs on thousands of products, phased out quota systems, and established a new global organization called the World Trade Organization (WTO) to settle trade disputes. Many trade experts believe that the existence of the WTO has encouraged countries with trade disputes to settle their differences instead of resorting to trade warfare.

The United States and World Trade Today

The Trade Deficit. Since the mid-1970s, the United States has imported more goods than it has exported. The trade deficit total (including goods and services) grew to a record $169 billion in 1998—up from $114 billion in 1997. Most economists believe that the trade deficit has caused hundreds of thousands of job losses in the domestic steel, automobile, and textile manufacturing industries.



Glasgow & Associates

The United States has not had a trade surplus since 1975. Today's $169 billion trade deficit results primarily from a $64 billion trade deficit with Japan (mostly motor vehicles) and a $57 billion trade deficit with China (primarily textiles and clothes).

Economists point to several reasons for the growing trade deficit. Some U.S. trading partners limit the amount and kinds of U.S. goods they will allow into their markets. The trade deficit has also increased because American consumers buy more goods made overseas than they do similar goods produced in the United States. The trade gap also reflects the recent strength of the U.S. economy, which has created a tremendous demand for imported consumer goods. Still, the falloff in U.S. exports worries many analysts because, if the domestic economy cools off, the United States must rely on foreign markets to keep its economy growing.

U.S. Trading Relationships. During the 1990s, the United States government further expanded its trading relationships with nations around the world. Officials hope that these agreements will succeed in promoting economic prosperity and spur other countries to enter similar agreements.

The European Union. The European Union is the United States' largest trading partner. Throughout 1992 and 1993, U.S. and European trade officials continued the Uruguay Round of GATT talks in hopes of finalizing a new world trade agreement. In December 1993, negotiators from the United States and Europe broke a deadlock over agriculture and other trade issues and approved the biggest free-trade agreement in history.

In January 1999, eleven European nations began a three-year process of replacing their individual currencies with a single currency called the euro. This goal is called European Monetary Union (EMU). European leaders hope that pooling their economies will enable their countries to compete more aggressively in the world market. According to President Bill Clinton, "A strong and stable Europe, with open markets and healthy growth, is good for America and for the world. A successful EMU that contributes to a dynamic Europe is clearly in our best interest."

North American Free Trade Agreement. In January 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement went

BANANA SPLIT

Trade disputes between economic powers are fought over all goods and services, big and small. In 1999, the United States and the European Union (EU) tussled over bananas. At issue was the EU's preferential import system for bananas produced by former European colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific by restricting bananas grown in Latin American countries. (Shown here is a banana harvester in St. Lucia.) The United States said that the EU policy costs American firms, such as Chiquita and Dole, $520 million in lost sales every year. Unsatisfied with the EU's concessions, the United States threatened to impose higher tariffs on certain European goods, which brought counter-threats from Europe. Many observers worried that the dispute could escalate into a full-fledged trade war.

AP Photo/Lynne Sladky

into effect. Under NAFTA, Canada, Mexico, and the United States are gradually eliminating barriers on farm products and manufactured goods and removing restrictions on "cross border" investments. Although some factories have moved their operations to Mexico since NAFTA was enacted, many Americans have gained employment due to a rising demand for U.S. exports. The Clinton administration favors the formation of a "Free Trade Area of the Americas" agreement with countries in Central and South America.

Trade with Japan. Tensions between the United States and Japan intensified in the 1990s because of Japan's trade advantage over the United States—amounting to about $64 billion in 1998. Some experts believe that this imbalance exists because the Japanese impose strict trade barriers to keep foreign goods out of their market. Despite new trade agreements and reduced tariffs, they said, many Japanese markets remain effectively closed to American imports. U.S. trade officials argue that Japan protects its domestic markets with discriminatory practices because of the strong ties between Japanese manufacturers, distributors, and government officials.

In the 1990s, Japan experienced its worst economic slump since the end of World War II. The Clinton administration has urged the Japanese government to resist domestic pressure to build more protectionist walls. Closing its market, many experts warn, would doom any progress in future trade negotiations.

CURRENT ISSUES

Free Trade and the U.S. Economy. Nations that trade goods have one primary goal: economic improvement. A country becomes more prosperous as more of its available workers have jobs. Therefore, policymakers and economists look to the unemployment rate as one indicator of the health of the U.S. economy. Free trade's effect on the number and quality of U.S. jobs is a matter of debate among many lawmakers and economists.

Opponents of NAFTA, GATT, and other free-trade agreements argue that they are causing substantial job losses in the United States in low-technology manufacturing. They say that recent trade treaties encourage American businesses to move their factories to Mexico and elsewhere, where employees work for less money. Critics contend that as low-skilled jobs disappear, unskilled and poorly educated U.S. workers often cannot find new jobs. Many analysts argue that losing low-skilled manufacturing jobs also worsens the gap in wages between middle- and lower-income people, contributing to greater economic and social inequality in the United States. In addition, critics point to the ballooning U.S. trade deficit as evidence that free trade agreements are not in the best interest of the country.

Proponents of free trade contend that liberalized trade policies actually improve the number and quality of American jobs. Although some U.S. industries may lose a number of low-skilled jobs, many authorities say that free-trade agreements boost U.S. exports, thereby creating many more domestic jobs than are lost by importing foreign goods. Moreover, many of the newly created jobs are in high-tech fields where American workers can make more money. Supporters say that expanding free-trade agreements to areas in South America, East Asia, and Europe will generate hundreds of thousands more jobs in the United States.

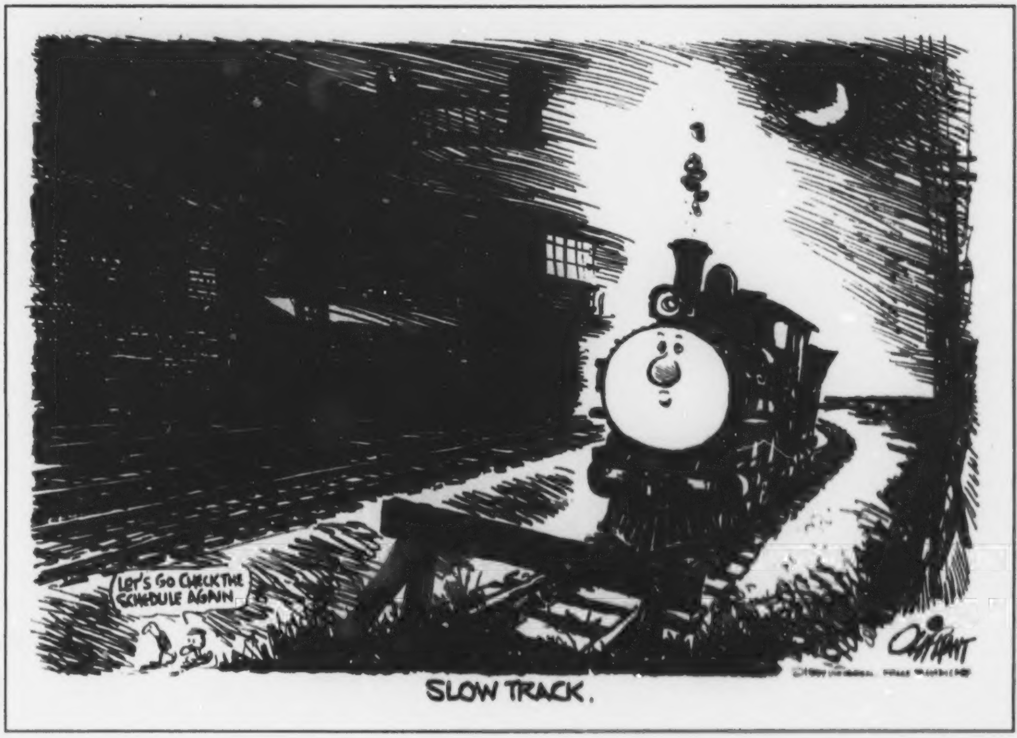
Slowing Down "Fast Track." The U.S. Constitution gives Congress exclusive authority to set tariffs and enact other legislation governing international trade. The president, on the other hand, has the authority to negotiate international agreements. If the president negotiates a trade pact that requires changes in U.S. tariffs and any other domestic laws, he must submit the agreement to Congress for approval, as President Clinton did with NAFTA in 1993 and GATT in 1994.

In 1997, President Clinton asked Congress to renew "fast track" negotiating trade authority to craft new agreements with countries in Latin America and East Asia. Fast track requires Congress to vote on a trade agreement without reopening any of the agreement's provisions for possible amendment. With fast track, the president can negotiate freely with other leaders, who are assured that any resulting accord will not be altered by Congress. Fast track was first granted to President Gerald Ford in 1974 and was renewed in 1979, 1984, 1988, 1991, and 1993—each time coinciding with important trade negotiations with other countries.

However, in 1997, when President Clinton asked Congress to grant him fast track authority for negotiations with Latin America and Asia, anxiety over the effect of recent trade agreements was increasing in Congress, particularly among Democrats. Many were not enthusiastic about the United States entering into another free trade pact with countries that they believed reaped more benefits than the United States. Critics wanted specific provisions written into the fast track legislation protecting U.S. environmental and

CHINA AND THE WTO

In 1998 and 1999, the Chinese government waged an aggressive campaign to be admitted into the World Trade Organization (WTO). With a new round of international trade talks scheduled for late 1999, China was eager to win admission and reap the benefits of membership in the WTO, including larger access to the U.S. market. Chinese and U.S. trade officials spent much of the year negotiating the terms of an agreement. A key condition was China's obligation to phase out a number of protectionist restrictions.


LET'S GO CHECK THE SCHEDULE AGAIN
OLIPHANT
SLOW TRACK.

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economic interests. Once it became clear that Congress would not renew fast track, the president withdrew it from consideration. Formal trade negotiations with Latin America and Asia have been delayed as a result.

Proponents of fast track argued that, without this important tool, the president is in a weaker position to speak for the U.S. government and negotiate with other countries. According to President Clinton, fast track would strengthen his hand during trade negotiations, while assuring foreign leaders that they are negotiating solely with the president and not 535 individual members of Congress. Refusing to grant fast track, supporters said, compromises the United States' status as the global economic leader, making the country look weak. They also pointed out that Congress does not give up its power to approve or reject a trade agreement; lawmakers simply cannot amend it, thereby expediting the approval process.

However, many members of Congress believe that recent trade agreements, especially NAFTA, have produced few, if any, real benefits for American workers and the environment. They warn that surrendering the authority to amend trade agreements strips Congress of one of its most valuable powers. Critics argue that fast track places too much power in the hands of the president. Trade agreements can change the lives of many Americans. Such a burden, many lawmakers contend, should be shared by the legislative branch. They believe fast track ties the hands of Congress and cuts off the debate of issues that can determine the economic future of the country.

Managed Trade. Many Americans believe that a policy of managed trade would better serve the U.S. economy. Under managed trade, the federal government would make more decisions about what U.S. industries produce, how much they export, and with whom they trade. Proponents of managed trade argue that the current system allows foreign countries to unfairly keep U.S. goods out of their markets. Many countries, including Japan, have adopted forms of managed trade that help their own industries export products to the United States.

Advocates of a managed trade policy say the U.S. government should help its promising industries export their products by giving them money for high-tech research or by repealing laws that prevent American companies from cooperating with one another. In addition, the government can aid U.S. exporters by negotiating agreements with other countries. Supporters of managed trade believe that these agreements would open foreign markets to American goods in exchange for U.S. commitments to lower trade barriers for foreign goods.

Opponents of managed trade see it as a threat to free trade. They argue that the market, not the government, should determine which goods

ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS

According to the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), U.S. companies that produce software, CDs, videos, and books lost about $12.4 billion in 1998 because of the illegal copying, or piracy, of their goods by foreign countries. The IIPA recommended that the U.S. government impose fines on the sixty-two offending countries for piracy crimes. Singled out in the report were China, where piracy resulted in a loss of $2.6 billion in U.S. trade, and Israel, which accounted for $141 million in U.S. losses.

countries produce, import, and export. They say that, if left alone, the market will determine which products a country can most profitably export and which products it should import. Critics believe that governments that manage trade risk wasting money by supporting industries that may prove to be less profitable. These companies may find that they are unable to export goods to countries that can make the same product for less. Thus, such industries would close, causing unemployment. Some experts further contend that managed trade undermines the GATT system, which has contributed to unprecedented economic growth in the years since World War II. They say that special agreements between countries and government aid to exporters can cause slower growth—or even recession—in the world economy.

OUTLOOK

Record-breaking trade deficits, layoffs in some American industries, and depressed prices for agricultural products have caused some people to believe that free trade has not helped the United States. However, President Clinton and many lawmakers think that enacting trade barriers would hurt the U.S. and global economies. The U.S. government has tried to increase exports and reduce the trade deficit by negotiating trade agreements with other nations. Because many economically vulnerable nations may resort to protectionism, U.S. leaders are determined to prevent a global trade crisis.

THE DEBATE: INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Free trade is harming the U.S. economy.

PRO: Free-trade agreements encourage U.S. businesses to move their factories to less developed countries where labor is cheap. As a result, American workers lose their jobs, especially those in low-technology manufacturing. In addition, since NAFTA and GATT went into effect, the trade deficit has soared to an all-time high. The United States is not reaping the same benefits from free-trade agreements that other countries are.

CON: Free trade opens more markets for U.S. goods and services and therefore leads to more jobs in the United States. Millions of new jobs have been created because of recent trade agreements. Job growth will increase even further as U.S. leaders expand free trade throughout Latin America and Asia. Protectionist walls will only undermine U.S. economic growth and cripple the global economy.

Congress should renew "fast track" trade negotiating authority.

PRO: Fast track authority has helped create important trade agreements that have strengthened the U.S. economy. Fast track gives the president credibility in trade negotiations and allows him to negotiate with foreign governments without fear of an agreement being amended by Congress. By not renewing this important tool, Congress is making the United States look weak and uncertain as a global economic leader.

CON: Fast track gives the president a free hand to produce a trade agreement with foreign governments that will affect millions of American families. That concentrates too much power in one branch of government. Instead, Congress must be able to amend the agreement to protect American workers and the environment—assurances that have not been part of recent trade agreements.

The U.S. government should try to manage trade.

PRO: Foreign governments subsidize exports and block American imports. The U.S. government should counter these policies with similar intervention. The government should provide subsidies, finance research, and allow competing companies to cooperate in developing new technologies. The government can also help U.S. industries by negotiating trade agreements with other countries.

CON: Managed trade is merely protectionism by another name. Agreements with other nations to restrict exports would raise the prices of restricted goods for U.S. consumers. The government could support industries that later turn out to be unprofitable because they still could not compete overseas. If so, the government would waste its money and fail to reduce the trade deficit.

WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

Since the United States exploded the first atomic (nuclear) bomb in 1945, many other nations have sought nuclear arms and the power they represent. The dangerous and destabilizing proliferation (spread) of nuclear weapons alarmed the global community. Nevertheless, some nations continue their quest for "the bomb." The technology to build nuclear weapons is available, and many countries have the ability to make them or to help others do so. Therefore, international agreements—and the organizations that ensure compliance with such treaties—are important in controlling nuclear proliferation.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States stop selling nuclear materials and technology?
- Should the United States develop a national missile defense system?
- Should the United States limit its sales of conventional weapons?

In the 1960s, the United States spearheaded the nuclear nonproliferation movement by rallying support for the United Nations (UN) Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the cornerstone of global efforts to curtail the manufacture of nuclear weapons. The antiproliferation campaign scored a major success in 1996 when UN members, including the United States, approved a new treaty to ban all testing of nuclear weapons. However, the campaign to curb the spread of nuclear weapons experienced a serious setback in May 1998, when bitter rivals India and Pakistan exploded nuclear devices. Suddenly, the "nuclear club" had two new members.

Antiproliferation efforts have also targeted conventional (nonnuclear) arms. Nations in volatile regions of the world are buying large amounts of sophisticated conventional weaponry. Most experts believe that the spread of conventional armaments and the development of nuclear weapons are major threats to global stability. Many look to the United States to help lead antiproliferation efforts.

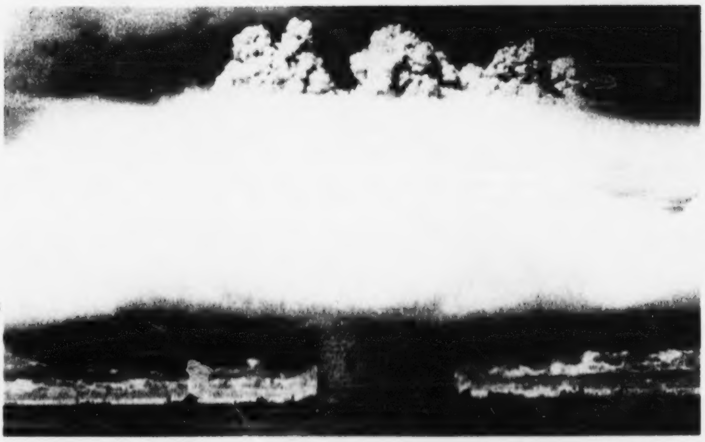
BACKGROUND

The Spread of Nuclear Weapons

The Atomic Bomb and the United States. In August 1945, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The attacks led to Japan's surrender and the end of World War II.

The world had witnessed the awesome power of nuclear technology. Soon after the war, the United States—in the Baruch Plan—proposed to the United Nations that an international agency control all nuclear technology and materials. The Soviet Union, however, vetoed this proposal and argued for a more immediate destruction of all existing nuclear bombs. The Soviets wanted to exploit their advantages in conventional arms and troop size by eliminating all nuclear weapons. Because world leaders could not reach an agreement on international control of nuclear weapons, Soviet leaders decided to continue their research on building nuclear devices. U.S. hopes of a nuclear monopoly were shattered when the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic device in 1949. Great Britain followed suit in 1952.

An Expanding Nuclear Club. In the early 1960s, both France and China detonated atomic bombs,



U.S. Department of Energy

During the Cold War, members of the nuclear club conducted atmospheric and underground tests of their nuclear weapons, which led to the development of larger, more powerful weapons.

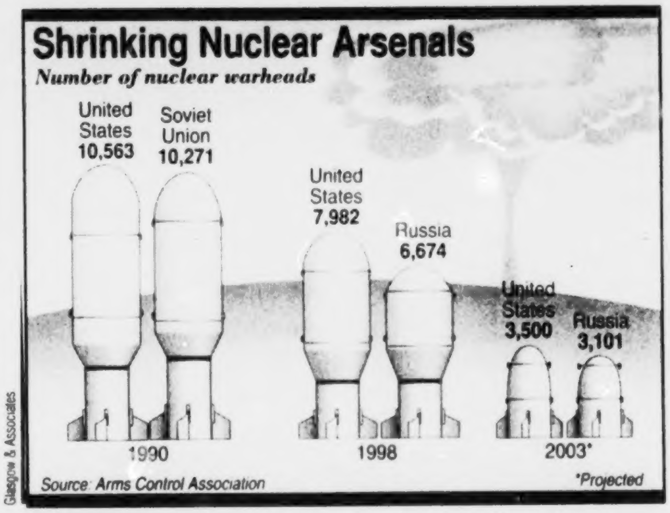
SATELLITE SECRETS

According to a congressional report released in late December 1998, the Chinese government obtained highly sensitive military technology, including nuclear weapon design plans, which the report says damages U.S. national security. The special investigation was prompted by concerns over the transfer of satellite- and missile-related technology by U.S. companies over the past ten years. The report includes evidence of a long-term Chinese plan to acquire such technology, even through theft. In the past, President Clinton has been criticized for overlooking certain Chinese transgressions in the areas of arms control and human rights in the name of developing stronger trade relations between the two countries. In early 1999, the U.S. government suspended sales of such technology to China.

adding to the number of members in the "nuclear club." The three original nuclear powers—the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain—worried that even more nations would develop the bomb. They rationalized that as one nation in a particular region went nuclear, its neighbors or rivals would also want similar weapons to avoid or defend against attack, thus increasing the risk of nuclear warfare or accidents. Many nonnuclear countries resented this assumption, contending that they would be just as careful in their use of nuclear weapons as the original members of the nuclear club.

Nonproliferation Treaties. As more nations gained nuclear weapons in the 1960s, the possibility of nuclear confrontation grew. The United States and other nuclear powers began a campaign to persuade nonnuclear countries from attempting to acquire nuclear capability.

UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The 1968 UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty was designed to halt the spread of nuclear weapons and promote peaceful uses of nuclear power. The treaty granted all nonnuclear signatories (signers) access to nuclear technology belonging to participating nuclear powers. The nonnuclear countries had to promise that they



By 2003, the number of nuclear bombs in the United States and Russia will be the lowest since the arms race began.

would not use the technology to make weapons. The United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain signed the treaty, thereby agreeing that they would not help others build nuclear bombs and that they would reduce their nuclear arsenals. In 1995, UN members decided that the treaty should be extended indefinitely. However, Israel and several other nations suspected of having developed nuclear weapons have not yet signed the treaty.

The Limited Test Ban Treaty. From the 1940s through the 1960s, the five nuclear powers—the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, China, and France—conducted explosive tests to develop nuclear weapons and to increase their bombs' power. Concerned about environmental damage, leaders from these countries signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963. The treaty made it illegal to test nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, outer space, and underwater.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. After the Limited Test Ban Treaty went into effect, exploding nuclear weapons underground remained legal. However, by the early 1990s, many world leaders, particularly those from nonnuclear countries, wanted all nuclear blasts to cease. In 1996, more than fifty members of the United Nations signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, making all forms of nuclear explosions illegal. Thus far, the United States and several other key nations have not ratified the treaty.

New Concerns. To the dismay of world leaders, longtime rivals India and Pakistan successfully tested nuclear devices in May 1998. Iran, Israel, Libya, and

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North Korea may also have such weapons or may be attempting to make them. In August 1998, North Korea tested a three-stage missile rocket over Japan, prompting grave U.S. concern that North Korea might soon be able to launch a missile with a nuclear warhead capable of reaching the United States.

The United States, China, France, and Germany have supplied some countries with the knowledge, technology, and materials to construct nuclear reactors for generating electricity. However, materials and technology sold for peaceful purposes can also be used to develop nuclear weapons. Although most nuclear transfers take place under internationally approved safeguards, it is possible for a determined country to develop nuclear bombs without being detected by the International Atomic Energy Agency, an arm of the United Nations.

Former Soviet Nuclear Weapons. Many Americans were afraid that the breakup of the Soviet Union into independent states would produce a nuclear "marketplace." A large number of nuclear weapons were scattered across four former Soviet republics—Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. U.S. officials were concerned that unfriendly nations might bid for these weapons and technology.

In January 1993, U.S. and Russian leaders signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks Treaty II (START II), which calls for each country to reduce its nuclear arsenal by more than one-third. Belarus and Kazakhstan agreed to give their nuclear weapons to Russia, and Ukraine leaders agreed to deactivate theirs. Russia's nuclear arsenal is shrinking because of economic depression. However, as of early 1999, the Russian legislature still had not approved START II. Aside from problems of implementation, many worry that Russia's deteriorating economic condition may encourage unemployed nuclear scientists from the former Soviet Union to sell their expertise to aggressive nations seeking to develop or upgrade their nuclear programs.

Conventional Weapons

The Global Marketplace. During the Cold War, the arms-control emphasis was on nuclear weapons. However, many experts believe the dramatic spread of conventional weapons is destabilizing volatile regions of the world. They are calling for a halt on weapons exports by the United States. The proliferation of conventional armaments has contributed to conflict in the Middle East, Africa, parts of eastern Europe, and Asia.

Arms purchases are soaring in Asia. For instance, China, Japan, and North Korea are improving their missile systems, so other countries in the region are building up their arsenals in response. Historic rivalries, such as the one between India and Pakistan, also fuel arms races. Pakistan, a developing country, spends more than 25 percent of its annual budget on defense. Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, and Israel are among the world's top arms buyers.

Chemical Weapons. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency believes that some countries may have dangerous stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. A chemical weapon is a toxic agent, such as mustard or nerve gas, that harms or kills people, animals, or plants. Biological weapons spread deadly diseases—like anthrax or plague—that attack humans.

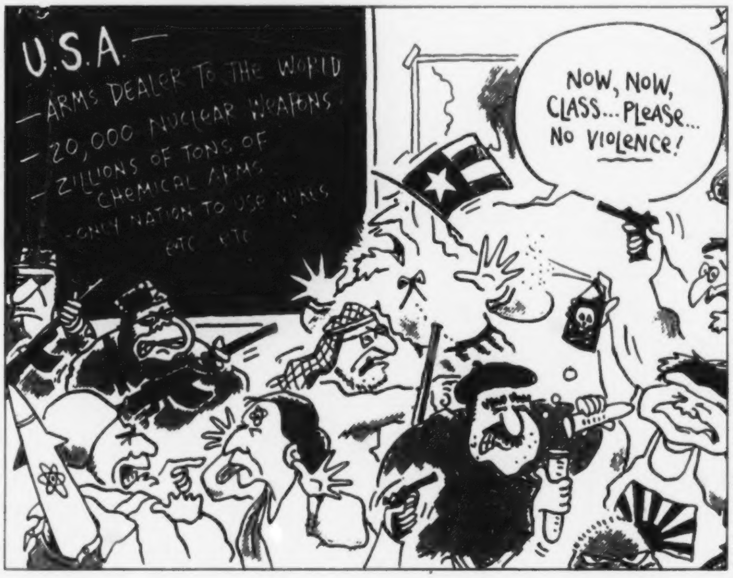
The United States, along with 163 other countries, signed a 1993 treaty called the Chemical Weapons Convention, which bans the use, production, and stockpiling of chemical weapons. Some experts think that twenty-five countries—including Iraq, Iran, Syria, North Korea, and Libya—may possess chemical weapons but have not declared them.

In 1998, Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, refused to allow UN inspectors to search certain buildings for illegal weapons of mass destruction, including chemical agents. Many experts in the United States thought that Iraq was hiding these weapons. The

U.S. government threatened to use military force if Iraq did not comply with the UN. After continued resistance, the United States, along with Great Britain, began military air strikes in December 1998, targeting Iraqi sites suspected of housing chemical weapons materials.

The Major Powers as Arms Dealers. Most arms-exporting countries agree that the spread of weapons in unstable regions of the world is a threat to peace. However, reducing arms sales has been difficult because many of these nations, including the United States, depend on the development and export of warplanes, artillery, tanks, small arms, and ammunition to help their economies. In most cases, the profits gained by selling conventional weapons are too great for arms-selling countries to forgo.

The five nations of the United Nations Security Council—China, France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States—are the world's top arms exporters, accounting for 90 percent of all arms transfers. According to a Congressional Research Service report, the United States delivered about $15 billion in conventional weapons to other nations in 1997.


U.S.A.—
—ARMS DEALER TO THE WORLD
—20,000 NUCLEAR WEAPONS
—ZILLIONS OF TONS OF CHEMICAL ARMS
—ONLY NATION TO USE NUKES
ETC. ETC.
NOW, NOW, CLASS... PLEASE... NO VIOLENCE!

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In the United States, the end of the Cold War reduced the domestic demand for high-tech weaponry, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs. The U.S. government then encouraged defense contractors to sell their hardware overseas to protect against further defense industry layoffs. Russia decreased its sales of weapons during this period; as a result, the United States was able to sell to more foreign arms purchasers. However, because overall world arms purchases during the same period dropped about 70 percent, the American defense industry lost billions of dollars.

CURRENT ISSUES

Restricting Sales of Nuclear Technology. Some American leaders believe that the United States should set an example for the world by sharply restricting its own sales of nuclear technology. These leaders convinced Congress to pass the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978, which denies nuclear technology to countries that the United States suspects of developing nuclear weapons. They hope that limiting sales of nuclear technology will lessen the threat of a "rogue" nation developing a nuclear bomb.

Opponents of this approach argue that overly rigid U.S. restrictions are ineffective because nations can easily find nuclear fuel and technical know-how elsewhere. They say that the United States should not deny nuclear technology to "non-risk" nations—nations that are not seeking nuclear weapons. They argue that the United States can better control the spread of nuclear weapons by being a predictable supplier of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Debating Missile Defense. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan proposed the creation of an antiballistic missile defense system to protect the United States from nuclear attack. Because the plan involved the use of space and laser technology, it was popularly referred to as the "Star Wars" plan. Congress appropriated money for research, but the system was never perfected nor deployed. Recently, the debate over establishing a national missile defense system has been revived.

In early 1999, the Clinton administration conceded a need for a defense against a possible limited nuclear attack from one of several rogue nations who have acquired long-range missile capabilities. Citing realistic and growing threats from North Korea, Iran, and Iraq, President Clinton proposed setting aside $6.6 billion—in addition to the more than $4 billion already allocated for research—for the construction of a ground-based missile defense system meant to protect the fifty states from a limited attack or accidental launch.

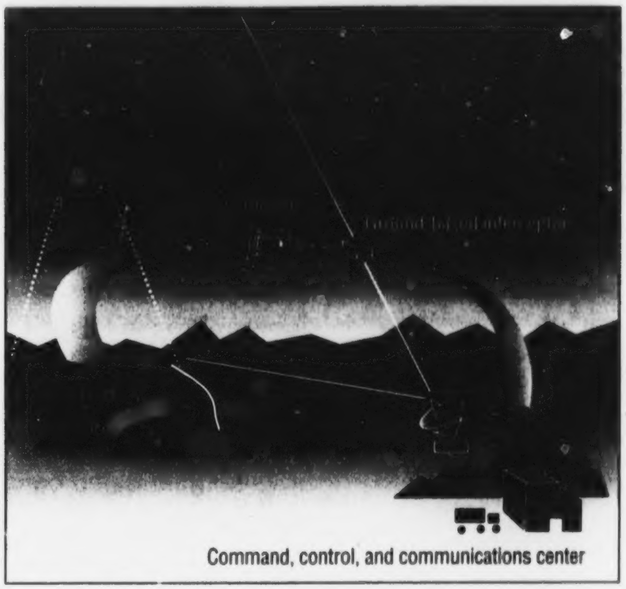
Many Americans believe that only deep cuts in the world's nuclear arsenals or even total nuclear disarmament will ensure global safety and that missile defense systems are incompatible with such goals. These critics argue that over the past ten years $40 billion has been poured into missile defense research, which has yet to yield a working system. Opponents also think that deploying such a defense is a direct violation of the Antiballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), signed with the Soviet Union in 1972, which does not allow for a multisite missile defense system. They say violating that treaty now will threaten Russia's ratifica-

LIMITING LAND MINES

Experts estimate that there are more than 100 million antipersonnel land mines—buried explosive devices—planted in about seventy countries around the world. Stretches of land in Bosnia, Cambodia, Iraq, Nicaragua, Somalia, and Vietnam are littered with land mines. These explosives kill or injure about 25,000 people each year; almost a third of the victims are children. In 1997, representatives from eighty-nine countries gathered in Canada to sign the Ottawa Treaty, which bans the production and use of land mines. The treaty, which went into effect in March 1999, also gives countries ten years to clear areas that have been planted with the devices. The United States has not yet signed the treaty because of concerns that, without using land mines, the safety of U.S. troops overseas may be jeopardized.

tion of START II, an important step towards controlling the numerous unstable nuclear materials inside the former Soviet Union.

Proponents of the antiballistic missile defense system contend that it is imperative that the United States actively defend American soil from the threat of nuclear attack now that nations like China and North Korea have demonstrated that they may have the capability to do so. They dispute the claim that a national missile defense system violates the ABM treaty, arguing that the treaty is not valid since the signing partner—the Soviet Union—no longer exists. Finally, they say that an effective system must be deployed as quickly as possible and that it can be done at a reasonable cost.


Command, control, and communications center

Michael Schad Johnstone

In one plan for a missile defense system, a space satellite would detect an incoming enemy missile and send signals to radar stations on the ground. A ground-based rocket would then be launched to intercept and destroy the missile before it reaches U.S. soil. A command, control, and communications center would oversee the operation.

Selling Conventional Arms. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has spent billions of dollars on peacekeeping missions in many of the world's hot spots. Ironically, in many of these places—such as Somalia, Haiti, and Panama—U.S. military forces have encountered foes armed with weapons sold to them by U.S. companies. This "boomerang effect" of the weapons trade has inspired legislative efforts to give Congress the power to approve or block weapons deals with foreign countries based on a "code of conduct." Such a code would ensure that only countries that demonstrated support for democracy and human rights, and that abstained from illegal acts of

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aggression, would be eligible to purchase U.S. arms. Such legislation has yet to be passed by Congress.

Supporters of these restrictions say that U.S.-built weapons should not be sold to nations that are a threat to American security. Moreover, they argue that unrestricted U.S. arms sales feed instability and violence in other countries. Between 1990 and 1994, 85 percent of U.S. foreign arms sales went to nondemocratic governments. Proponents of the "code of conduct" think that the United States should sell weapons responsibly and set a standard for other arms-dealing countries.

However, critics counter that selling some countries sophisticated conventional arms deters those nations from seeking nuclear weapons. In addition, opponents of restricting arms exports believe that the United States has an economic incentive to sell conventional weapons. The development and manufacture of sophisticated military hardware accounts for thousands of jobs in the United States. Critics also point out that through weapons sales, the United States maintains positive relations with some countries, thus retaining some leverage over their actions.

OUTLOOK

Although the United States and Russia have agreed to reduce their nuclear stockpiles, carrying out the START II agreement has been slow and uncertain. Meanwhile, many observers think that atomic weapons are still in high demand in some parts of the world. These issues highlight the importance of implementing strict controls to curb the illegal sale of nuclear know-how. In addition, U.S. lawmakers must balance the economic benefits of selling conventional weapons overseas with the military costs of quelling the foreign conflicts those weapons fuel. They also must weigh the pros and cons of building a national missile defense system. The U.S. government's policies on these issues today will be a major factor in determining the extent of global weapons proliferation in the twenty-first century.

THE DEBATE: WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

The United States should stop selling nuclear materials and technology.

PRO: The next country to use the atomic bomb will probably have built it from materials provided by nations in the nuclear club. Even if the United States continues selling weapons-related materials to countries it considers "safe," a buyer might sell that material to another nation that wants to build nuclear bombs. A ban on the sale of U.S. technology and materials would limit world supplies and set an example for other nuclear exporters.

CON: Halting U.S. sales of weapons-related materials and technology would only work if the United States were the sole supplier. Years ago, the United States might have had such a monopoly, but today China, France, Japan, Germany, and other countries are both able and willing to export nuclear technology. Without the support of other countries, a U.S. ban would only result in lost business for the American defense industry.

The United States should develop and deploy a national missile defense system.

PRO: The United States must defend its homeland from possible nuclear attack. A national missile defense system does not violate the 1972 ABM treaty because that treaty—made with the former Soviet Union—is no longer valid. The U.S. has the capacity to deploy an effective defense system at a price that is reasonable for the protection it will provide.

CON: The world will be safe only when major cuts in nuclear weapons are complete. A national missile defense system directly contradicts the philosophy of nuclear cutbacks. Developing such a system increases the risk that Russia will not ratify the START II treaty. Besides, a missile defense system would be far too expensive and has not yet been proven to work.

The United States should limit its sales of conventional weapons.

PRO: The United States continues to export arms to volatile world regions, promoting armed conflict in the Middle East and Asia. Unless the sale of these weapons is cut dramatically, the U.S. military will likely be pulled into more regional conflicts in which both sides are using U.S.-made weapons. The United States should not sell arms to countries that do not meet the "code of conduct" criteria.

CON: The United States will lose economically if it reduces its exports of conventional weapons. Many Americans will lose their jobs, adding to the number of unemployed workers in defense industries. Restricting arms sales could contribute to the insecurity of many countries, causing them to resume their attempts to obtain nuclear weapons. Arms exports also give the United States political leverage.

WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

Although nations around the world have made significant advances in agriculture and medicine over the years, one-fifth of the world's population still live in poverty; one in seven suffer from malnutrition. Many are ill and illiterate. Analysts estimate that as many as 40,000 children die each day of starvation and preventable diseases. Infectious diseases kill up to 50,000 people a day—most in poor countries. Moreover, the world's population is predicted to swell from almost 6 billion today to 8.5 billion by 2050, further taxing Earth's resources and deepening world poverty.

Every year, the United States and other industrialized nations send money and other forms of aid to countries struggling to feed their people and provide basic services. But over the years, U.S. foreign aid programs have come under fire. Critics contend that these programs are ineffective and have made recipient governments too dependent on foreign economic assistance. Some also say that the money would be better spent on domestic programs or debt reduction in the United States. However, others argue that the United States, which spends less than 1 percent of its annual federal budget on foreign aid, has a moral responsibility as the wealthiest nation in the world to help people in need. In addition, recent economic crises and natural disasters have led to more calls for U.S. assistance in alleviating hardship around the world.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Is foreign aid in the U.S. national interest?
- Should the United States give more money to the IMF?
- Should the United States promote family planning to curb population growth?

BACKGROUND

North versus South

The Terms of Poverty. During the Cold War, nations usually aligned themselves either with the Western democratic countries (the United States and western Europe) or with the Eastern communist bloc (the Soviet Union and eastern Europe). When East-West tensions largely disappeared after the breakup of the Soviet empire in 1991, the relationship between rich and poor countries began to play a more prominent role in international politics. Countries with advanced, industrialized economies had a much higher standard of living than the less developed countries. Leaders of the poor, developing nations point to this unequal distribution of the world's wealth when they ask for more assistance. The tension between these two groups of countries is often called the North-South conflict because richer, developed countries tend to be located in the Northern Hemisphere, while poorer, less developed countries generally are found near or south of the equator in Africa, Asia, and South America.

CORBIS/Sergio Dorantes

Recent statistics indicate that the global income gap is getting worse. The richest 20 percent of the population controls nearly 80 percent of the world's wealth. Meanwhile, more than half the world's people have incomes of less than two dollars a day and live in deplorable conditions, like these in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The Pattern of Poverty. About 1.3 billion of the world's people live in the kind of poverty that most Americans cannot imagine. In developing countries, farming is done with the most basic tools and techniques, and there is little industry. Health and sanitation standards are low, leading to rampant disease, a high rate of infant mortality, and a short life expectancy. Most roads are unpaved and few villages have plumbing or electricity. Millions of adults in the developing world cannot read or write. Most exist on an income of one or two dollars a day.

The number of poverty-stricken people is growing. Experts predict the world's population will reach 8.5 billion by 2050, with the highest growth rates in the less developed nations. While women in most developed countries have, on average, fewer than two children during their lifetimes, women in some developing countries may average more than five children. Two-thirds of the world's impoverished people are younger than 15 years old.

Many advocates for helping people in need around the world recommend expanding the availability of birth control and family planning techniques. They point out that their efforts have already led to significant reductions in birthrates in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Others, however, attribute much of the drop in fertility rates—especially in Asia and Latin America—to improved economies and higher levels of education.

World Hunger. Hunger is a major problem in developing countries. Despite advances in agricultural technology and years of international aid programs, almost 850 million people worldwide do not get enough to eat each day. Drought, floods, and civil war have led to widescale food shortages in countries such as North Korea, Sudan, Honduras, and Rwanda. Although grain production worldwide has increased in recent years, many nations cannot afford to buy it or lack the transportation facilities to import the grain and distribute it to where it is needed.

In 1996, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization held a World Food Summit in Rome to discuss strategies for combating hunger in the next century. Items on the agenda included developing more family planning programs, promoting more efficient farming methods, and sponsoring larger international assistance programs. Despite these new and ongoing efforts, the problem may get worse.

U.S. Foreign Aid. American leaders have often acted on the belief that giving aid to other nations in need is not only a critical humanitarian effort, but often is in the national interest of the United States. For example, after World War II, the United States instituted a huge program called the Marshall Plan, which granted $13 billion (about $55 billion in 1998 dollars) to help restart the world's economy and stabilize potential U.S. allies in Europe. Officials believed that the program would help stop the spread of communism by combating the "real enemies" of democracy: "hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos." However, U.S. foreign aid dollars have dropped steadily since 1950, reaching the point to where the United States currently commits less than 1 percent of its annual federal budget to foreign aid each year—about $11 billion in 1998.

Most U.S. aid is bilateral (two-sided) and goes directly from the United States to another country. For the least developed countries, U.S. aid provides basic humanitarian support to feed the hungry and treat the sick. Aid can also help raise the standard of living and enable developing countries to buy more American products. Bilateral aid is also used for security purposes.

BRAZIL GETS A BOOST

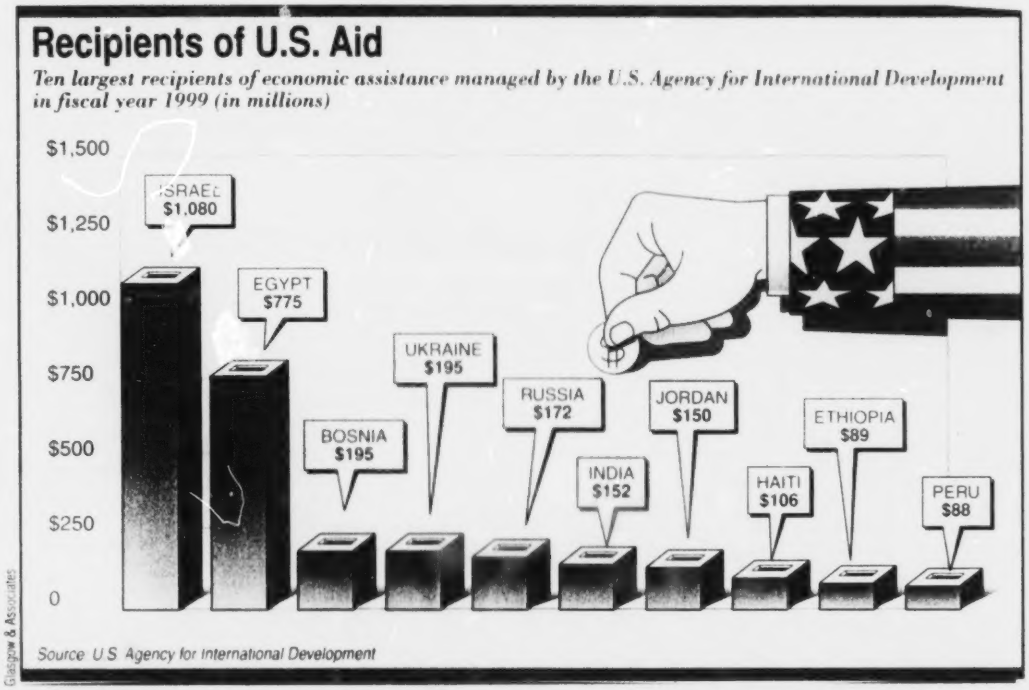
One of the emergency patients in the economic crises of 1998 was Brazil, a major U.S. trade partner. Upon fears that Brazil would devalue its currency and bring the economies of other Latin American nations down with it, the IMF put together a $42 billion rescue package similar to earlier loan packages given to several Asian countries. Not all the money, however, will come from the IMF; some will come in the form of loans from the United States and other industrial nations along with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. In return for the loans, Brazil's government promised to reduce its budget deficit.

Development and Humanitarian Assistance. The U.S. government gives development and humanitarian assistance to developing countries to build roads, hospitals, schools, and power plants or to provide them with food and medical care. The funds are channeled through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which sponsors agriculture, rural development, and nutrition programs in other countries. In some cases, the United States sends emergency aid to a region that seeks relief from a natural disaster—such as Hurricane Mitch, which devastated parts of Central America in 1998.

Security Assistance. The United States also provides foreign aid in the form of security assistance. Security assistance is designed to strengthen the armed forces and economies of friendly governments, enabling them to buy American-made weapons, airplanes, and military vehicles and to train soldiers for their national defense. The United States currently gives millions of dollars in security assistance to Israel and Egypt to help maintain peace and stability in the Middle East.

U.S. and international relief organizations delivered millions of dollars worth of emergency supplies and assistance to countries of Central America devastated by Hurricane Mitch. Here, Hondurans receive food rations from U.S. troops.

CORBIS/AFP


Recipients of U.S. Aid

Ten largest recipients of economic assistance managed by the U.S. Agency for International Development in fiscal year 1999 (in millions)

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development

Glasgow & Associates

Many Americans believe that the United States is too generous with foreign aid, while others say the richest country in the world does not do enough to assist other nations.

Multilateral Aid. The U.S. government also gives money to international aid organizations. These organizations then distribute the funds to poor or economically faltering countries to help them combat specific problems. This type of aid is called multilateral (many-sided) because many nations contribute funds that are then given to a number of different nations.

Some of the largest multilateral aid sources are the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF was formed in 1944 to oversee the world's monetary system but is now best known for lending money to member nations who are in financial crisis. Money for the Fund comes from its 182 members who are assessed a quota based on the size of their economies; the United States is the largest contributor at $35 billion. Recipients must pay back the loans after their economies have recovered. In recent years, multibillion-dollar IMF loans have gone to Mexico, Russia, and Brazil—all large economies that could no longer pay their debts. In addition, the IMF has been addressing the current financial crisis in Asia by making large loans to Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, and South Korea.

CURRENT ISSUES

A National Interest? During the Cold War, the United States had a clear policy goal for its foreign aid programs—stopping the spread of communism. By enabling European countries—and later, nations in Asia and Latin America—to stabilize their economies and gradually increase their standard of living, the United States created a favorable climate for democracy. However, since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, some Americans question whether giving foreign aid is in the national interest.

Supporters of giving aid believe that investment abroad is as important to the U.S. national interest as investment at home is. They think that the United States has a responsibility to help stabilize countries in sub-Saharan Africa, eastern Europe, and Latin America so democracy and capitalism can flourish. They believe that every dollar spent on foreign aid

In 1961, the first Peace Corps volunteers set foot on foreign soil to help needy people learn to improve their lives. Nearly 150,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps in about 125 countries. Here, a volunteer helps a local fish farmer in Nepal.

Peace Corps Photo by Bill Strassberger

now is a dollar that may not have to be spent on U.S. military intervention in the future. In addition, supporters say many developing countries could eventually become lucrative trading partners if the United States invests in their education, infrastructure, and agricultural development.

However, many Americans believe that foreign aid is no longer vital to the U.S. national interest. They say that America should take care of its own problems first before it gives money to foreign nations. Opponents also dispute the idea that recipient nations will become loyal allies of the United States. Many members of Congress say that foreign aid is no longer in the national interest because recipient nations often clash with the United States over international issues. For example, despite the fact that the United States has given Russia billions of dollars in aid, the Russian government has been reluctant to support U.S. policies in Yugoslavia and Iraq. Some experts believe that Israel, the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, challenges American efforts to settle the unrest in the Middle East.

Giving More Dollars to the IMF. World and American markets have been badly hurt by the recent economic crisis in Asia. To ease the strain, the IMF wants to make more money available for Asia and has asked members to increase their quotas by 45 percent. President Clinton agrees that some Asian nations need more help and wants Congress to authorize an additional $18 billion for the Fund.

Supporters of increased U.S. financing for the IMF say the additional money is needed to combat the huge American trade imbalance with Asia and the economic distress the Asian financial crisis is causing U.S. industries that sell to Asia. They warn that if Asian markets for American goods and services continue to dry up, thousands of American

BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY

The United Nations now believes that there will be about 500 million fewer people on Earth in 2050 than it predicted in 1994. But the world's population is growing at a staggering rate—about 1.33 percent per year. On January 1, 2000, 6 billion people will be living on the planet compared to 1.6 billion only 100 years earlier. Despite lower birth rates and the devastation of AIDS and other infectious diseases, the global population increases by about 9,200 people per hour.

Some members of Congress say the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) wastes money and should be abolished. But supporters of the agency say it has improved millions of lives through efforts such as this mechanized rice growing project in Indonesia.

U.S. Agency for International Development

workers will lose their jobs. They say the money is needed to protect the U.S. and world economies and ward off future economic disasters. Supporters also point out that the additional funds would not cost U.S. taxpayers anything since the money will be paid back.

Opponents of the proposal counter that IMF policies are interfering with free markets and keeping afloat reckless governments that are solely to blame for their economic troubles. They also argue that IMF loan conditions are so rigorous that they force recipient governments to weaken protections for workers and the environment and raise taxes on populations that are already struggling. In addition, some opponents in Congress believe the additional money they are being asked to appropriate could be better used for domestic programs.

The Population Explosion. Many experts worry that the world's growing population will add to the poverty problem in developing countries. By 2050, 8.5 billion people will inhabit Earth, straining the water, soil, and other natural resources that are key to human survival. More than 90 percent of world population growth over the next fifty years will take place in developing countries. In 1997 Congress passed, and President Bill Clinton signed, a resolution that granted $385 million to more than 100 developing countries for contraceptives and sex education programs.

Many economists say that stabilizing population growth should be a top international priority because it has tremendous implications for the economic, political, and environmental welfare of the world. These experts support increased access to birth control information and contraceptives for women in the developing world. They also think that sex education will reduce the number of maternal and infant deaths, as well as the spread of AIDS. Some analysts believe that such family planning efforts will help reduce the number of abortions performed in developing countries. They maintain that women with family planning options will choose to have fewer children, thus improving their families' chances for more economically sound futures.

Other U.S. policymakers think that giving funds to global organizations that might recommend abortion as an option is morally wrong. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush suspended U.S. support of International Planned Parenthood and the United Nations Population Fund because these groups discussed abortion as an option in family planning. President Clinton lifted the ban in 1993, but some continue to oppose giving U.S. aid to such organizations. They also say promoting birth control strategies abroad amounts to international

AIDS AND WORLD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

In 1998, the United Nations revised downward its estimate of the world's population by 2050 from more than 9 billion to 8.5 billion. A major reason for the smaller projection is the drop in the average fertility level around the world. Women are now averaging 2.7 births, down from 5 births in the early 1950s. Moreover, the devastating mortality toll caused by AIDS, especially in Africa, has reduced the average life expectancy in the twenty-nine hardest hit African nations by seven years. For example, in Botswana, where one of every four adults is infected, life expectancy is anticipated to fall from 61 years in 1990–95 to 41 by 2000–05 because of the AIDS epidemic. The UN report projects Botswana's population by 2025 to be 23 percent smaller than it would have been in the absence of AIDS.

intervention in a private family matter and should be stopped.

Many believe that improving education and the economy in developing countries, rather than promoting family planning, will do more to curb population growth.

OUTLOOK

Over the years, U.S. foreign aid has been sent to foreign governments to decrease poverty, promote political stability and democracy, and keep allies strong. Recognizing that the approximately 1.3 billion people living in poverty and amidst environmental decay present a serious problem, the nations of the world are reevaluating their efforts to relieve the struggle of developing countries. The population explosion is straining Earth's food supplies, forests, and oceans. Nearly one-fifth of the world's people still do not have enough food, adequate shelter, and sanitation. Such problems cause both U.S. and global leaders to reconsider how much they should invest in trying to improve the lives of people in need. At a time when no federal programs are safe from budget cuts, U.S. leaders must decide what kind of foreign aid commitments their country can and should make.

THE DEBATE: WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

Foreign aid is in the U.S. national interest.

PRO: The United States cannot afford to ignore the developing world. Providing economic and development assistance to less developed countries builds alliances and encourages democracy. The need for military intervention in the future can be diminished if the United States enables these nations to stabilize their economies, feed their people, and educate their children.

CON: The United States must prioritize its federal spending. Giving money to foreign governments is not as important as attending to domestic issues, such as reducing the national debt. Foreign aid programs have been ineffective and have not made strong trading partners or military alliances out of recipient nations. The United States cannot afford to come to the aid of every poor nation.

The United States should give more money to the IMF.

PRO: As its richest member, the United States should not hesitate to add its share toward increasing the pool of money available to the IMF for loans to nations in economic distress. The Asians are America's biggest customers, but if their markets continue to dry up, thousands of U.S. workers are going to lose their jobs. Besides, the money does not cost U.S. taxpayers; it is only a loan that must be paid back.

CON: IMF loans interfere with free markets and only help prop up government leaders whose unwise policies got them into trouble in the first place. Plus, these leaders are often forced to ask their people to pay higher taxes and sacrifice job and environmental protections so their government can pay back the loans. The United States already contributes $35 billion to the IMF and should not have to give more.

The United States should promote family planning to curb population growth.

PRO: World poverty can only be reduced if population growth is brought under control. Millions of couples want information about birth control but cannot get it. The United States should share information with developing countries. Providing family planning information will enable women in developing countries—and their children—to have a better chance to escape disease and poverty.

CON: The United States should not provide any aid that might be used to support abortion. Instead, it should provide the economic support that will help developing countries modernize. Improving the economies of developing nations will encourage their people to have smaller families. Decisions about family size should not be influenced by U.S. governmental policies.

EAST ASIA

East Asia includes the countries in the easternmost part of the Asian continent, the Indochina and Malay Peninsulas, and the island nations of Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Throughout most of the 1980s and part of the 1990s, East Asia was one of the fastest-growing economic regions in the world. Japan led many high-tech industries and became both a major economic partner and competitor of the United States. Once-isolated China has also produced enormous economic growth rates and an unprecedented increase in the standard of living of its citizens. Even smaller nations such as Brunei, South Korea, and Vietnam experienced dramatic economic gains.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States grant permanent MFN status to China?
- Should the United States end foreign aid to North Korea?
- Should the United States withdraw its troops from Japan?

In recent years, however, East Asia has been under enormous economic stress. In 1997, a financial crisis sent shockwaves throughout the region; Japan's economic troubles, which began earlier in the decade, only added to the turmoil and uncertainty. Although the U.S. economy appears to have thus far avoided contracting the "Asian flu," American leaders worry about the long-term consequences of having one of its largest markets remain economically weak. If demand for U.S. products continues to fall in Asia, the American economy may suffer.

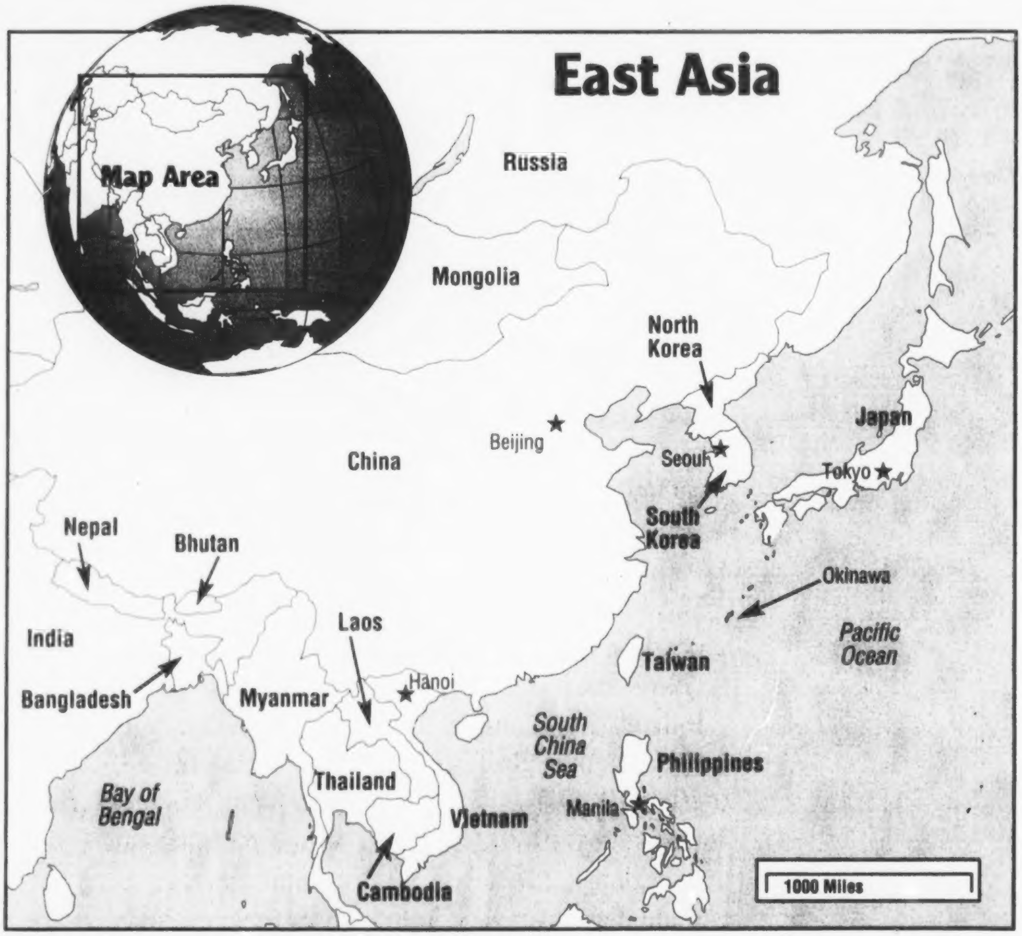
U.S. relations with several East Asian countries are tense on other issues. China's human rights violations and North Korea's ambitions to acquire nuclear weapons have been a recurring source of conflict with the United States. As U.S. leaders focus much of their foreign policy agenda on East Asia, they realize that the region presents unique challenges that require innovative diplomatic and economic solutions.

BACKGROUND

Japan

U.S.-Japan Relations, 1945–52. After U.S. atomic bombs destroyed two Japanese cities in 1945, Japan surrendered to the United States, bringing World War II to an end. Japan was then placed under U.S. military occupation. The Japanese adopted a new democratic system of government, with a parliament, a prime minister, and a supreme court. The Japanese constitution also demilitarized the country, denying it the right to raise an army.

In 1952, Japan signed a peace treaty with the United States, ending seven years of U.S. military occupation. Japanese leaders also signed the Mutual Security Treaty,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Bangladesh
Myanmar
Hanoi
South China Sea
Philippines
Thailand
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Vietnam
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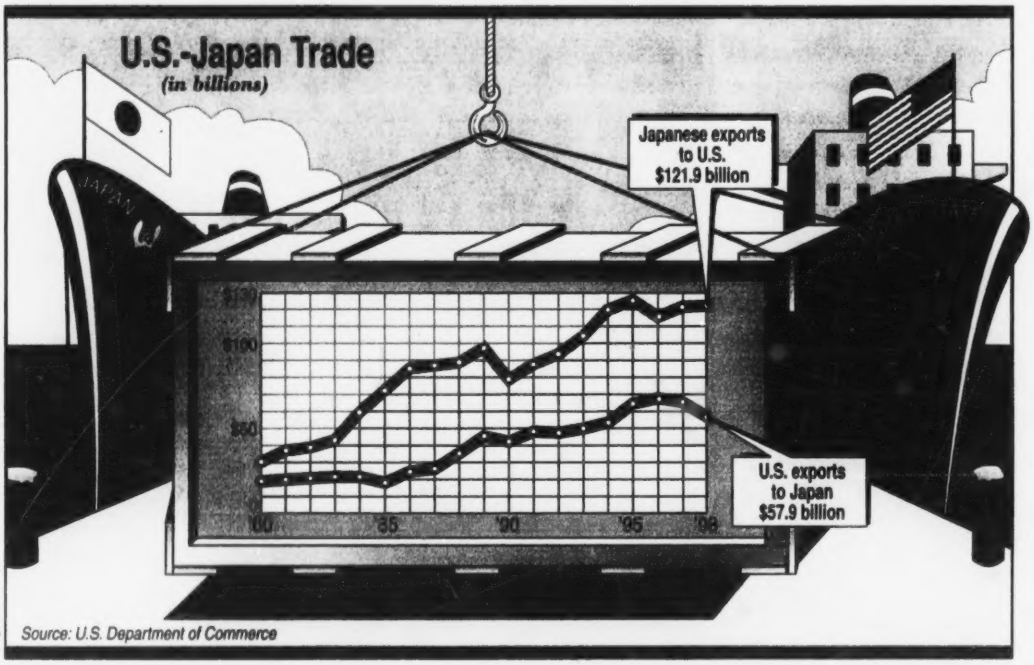
which states that the United States would defend Japan in case of attack. In exchange, the United States is allowed to maintain military bases there.

Japan's Economic Miracle. After World War II, Japanese industrialists discovered that they were ten years behind the latest advances in technology and production. However, with American aid, Japan built its postwar industries. The Japanese government also introduced new management techniques and erected trade barriers to protect new industries.

The government helped companies grow by supporting potentially prosperous industries with grants for research and development and by allowing competing companies to work together to develop new technologies and products. These efforts were bolstered by Japan's well-educated workers, who were able to adopt, and often improve, foreign technology. As a result, Japan's productivity rate exceeded even that of the United States. By the 1960s, industries in Japan were turning out high-quality consumer goods, such as clothing, radios, televisions, cameras, and automobiles, and exporting them to the United States and elsewhere.

Japan's Bubble Bursts. After achieving one of the highest economic growth rates in the industrialized world throughout the 1980s, Japan's economy slowed considerably in the early 1990s. Plummeting stock and real estate prices marked the end of Japan's rise to global prominence. Although it remained the world's second largest economy, Japan entered its eighth consecutive year of recession in 1999.

U.S.-Japan Trade. Trade is essential to Japan's economy. Because this island country has few natural resources, it must import most of the raw materials it needs for manufacturing. To pay for these imports, Japan must sell finished goods to other nations. In the 1960s, the United States became Japan's biggest customer. By 1965, Japan was selling more products to Americans than it was buying from them, creating a trade deficit for the United States that continues today.



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce

Glasgow & Associates

Every year since 1965, Japan has exported more goods to the United States than the United States has exported to Japan. Japan exports manufactured goods such as cars, machines, and telecommunications equipment to the United States. Americans ship raw materials such as metal, coal, lumber, and food to Japan.

The U.S. trade deficit with Japan has caused conflicts between the two countries. Officials from both governments have negotiated several agreements to increase U.S. exports and reduce Japanese exports in an effort to close the trade gap. Nevertheless, in 1998, Japan's trade surplus with the United States rose to an all-time high of $64 billion.

China

Communism and the Great Leap Forward. Following World War II, two political parties in China—the Nationalist Party, led by Chiang Kaishek, and the Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong—fought for control of the country. In 1949, the long struggle ended with a victory by the Communists; Mao renamed the country the People's Republic of China (PRC). Meanwhile, Chiang took his nationalist government to the island of Formosa, later renamed Taiwan.

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Mao Zedong (shown on right, greeting President Richard Nixon) was chairman of the Communist Party of China and the principal founder of the People's Republic of China. In 1958, Mao implemented the Great Leap Forward, which resulted in starvation and misery for millions of Chinese citizens.

Among Mao's goals was the elimination of poverty and inequality among the masses by redistributing food, land, and other resources. The first ten years of communist rule produced some economic achievements but fell far short of meeting the needs of the Chinese people. In 1958, Mao announced a new economic program, known as the Great Leap Forward, which was meant to modernize his country's agriculture and industry. The program was a disaster. It not only failed to achieve its economic goals but also led to unrest among the people, the imprisonment and execution of dissidents, and China's isolation from the rest of the world.

Changing Leaders and Economic Policy. After Mao died in 1976, Deng Xiaoping emerged as China's leader. Although the overall structure and principles of communism remained intact, Deng and his supporters radically altered Chinese economic policy. They initiated an "open door" policy with the West to increase trade and attract foreign investors to China. To modernize agriculture and industry, Deng experimented with capitalist concepts such as private property and free-market competition. Observers were concerned about the continuation of reforms when, in 1997, the 92-year-old Deng died.

However, China's move toward capitalism continues today. As a result of Deng's reforms, China's economy has grown at an annual rate of about 9 percent since the early 1980s. Experts believe that by early in the twenty-first century, China will become one of the top dozen exporters in the world.

Deng's successor, President Jiang Zemin, has agreed to share power in the central government and allow local governments to make more decisions. China's economic liberalization has continued under the new leadership. In March 1999, the Chinese national legislature passed an amendment to the constitution to "protect the legitimate rights and interests of private enterprise."

U.S.-China Relations. The takeover by Communists in China in 1949 was a great shock to U.S. leaders, whose foreign policy was dedicated to stopping the spread of communism. The United States refused to recognize the People's Republic of China. Instead, it maintained diplomatic relations with the PRC's rival, the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan. Chinese leaders in the PRC were outspokenly anti-American, and Chinese soldiers fought against U.S. forces in the Korean War.

By the 1970s, China had become a world power, but its relations with the neighboring Soviet Union were worsening. In 1972, President Richard Nixon stunned the world by going to China, and Chinese-American relations quickly improved. President Jimmy Carter established full diplomatic relations with China in 1979.

During the 1980s, the United States and China continued their constructive but uneasy relationship. As Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms pushed China toward capitalism, Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush made more diplomatic overtures to encourage Deng to adopt political reforms as well.

Tiananmen Square. In 1989, more than 100,000 Chinese students and workers staged demonstrations in Beijing, the capital of China, demanding democratic reforms and the removal of Deng from power. The government imposed martial law, but the protesters ignored it. Deng then ordered tanks and armored vehicles to attack the protesters massed in Tiananmen Square. About 800 or more people died, and thousands of others were injured. Hundreds were arrested; some were later executed.

To most observers, the attack on the protesters in Tiananmen Square illustrated the Chinese government's brutal disregard for human rights. Although President Bush denounced the attack, he still believed it was in the United States' best interest not to isolate China, but to continue to help it develop economically. Bush agreed to renew China's most favored nation (MFN) trade status. MFN trade status encourages Chinese exports to the United States because it grants them reduced tariffs.

Tensions in the 1990s. Relations between the United States and China deteriorated during the 1990s over human rights and trade issues. Some lawmakers argued that the United States should not grant trade privileges to countries that repress and mistreat their citizens. Others believed that China's growing economic strength and world influence warranted more constructive exchanges. Summit meetings between U.S. and Chinese leaders in 1997 and 1999 produced little agreement between the two governments on China's human rights record.

In 1999, U.S. relations with China worsened after it was revealed that the Chinese stole important nuclear secrets from U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories during the 1980s. Many U.S. officials fear that this technology has made it easier for China to deploy missiles that could threaten the United States.

To further complicate matters, the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, was inadvertantly bombed by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in April 1999. This event prompted outrage among Chinese leaders, and protests against the United States erupted in China.

North and South Korea

The Division of Korea and the Korean War. Japan controlled Korea from 1894 until 1945. When Japan surrendered to the United States and ended World War II, Korea was partitioned into two sections: the North (allied with the Soviet Union) and the South (allied with the United States). In 1948, both superpowers withdrew their forces, but no agreement was reached on reunification.

In June 1950, communist North Korea invaded South Korea. This military action, which was supported by the Soviet Union, was an attempt to unify the two Koreas under communist rule. The United States sent armed forces as part of an allied United Nations "police action" to repel the invasion. The two sides fought to a stalemate and, in July 1953, signed an armistice that established a demilitarized zone between the two Koreas. Forty-five years later, North and South Korea are technically still at war because the armistice did not lead to a permanent peace treaty. Today, the United States keeps about 37,000 troops on the South Korean side of the demilitarized zone.

After the war, North Korea continued under a hard-line communist regime. It was ruled by Kim Il Sung from 1948 until his death in July 1994. His son, Kim Jong Il, now leads the country. Across the demilitarized zone, in 1961, a military coup established authoritarian rule in South Korea. In 1992, South Korea held its first fully democratic elections in more than thirty years.

North Korea Isolated. While South Korea has made significant economic and democratic progress, North Korea's economic and social conditions have worsened. In 1991, North Korea's ally, the Soviet Union, abandoned communism and broke apart. The

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN VIETNAM

In 1998, the U.S. State Department reported that communist Vietnam continues to violate basic civil liberties of its people, namely freedom of religion. Vietnamese officials disputed this finding, saying that religious freedom exists for Vietnam's 78 million citizens. Indeed, according to experts, Vietnam has the most open climate for religious worship that it has seen in decades. However, government leaders claim that some controls on religion are necessary because, in the past, religious institutions have undermined the country's independence.

ESCAPE FROM FAMINE

The famine that has wreaked havoc in North Korea over the past few years has sent more than 100,000 refugees across the border into China in search of food. Many of the North Koreans enter China's Jilin Province, which is home to much of the country's ethnic Korean population. There, local churches have taken care of the refugees. However, in January 1999, Chinese authorities began expelling many of the illegal immigrants. After being handed over to North Korean authorities, the apprehended refugees are usually sent to a labor camp.

following year, China, another important North Korean ally, established diplomatic relations with South Korea, an act that North Korea's leaders viewed as a betrayal. In the 1990s, North Korea has become one of the most isolated—and according to some, dangerous—nations in the world. Suspected of trying to develop nuclear weapons (a violation of the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty that North Korea signed in 1985), North Korea was confronted by the United States and its allies in 1994. Tensions reached a boiling point, but the two sides struck a deal. The United States agreed to help build nuclear power plants in North Korea. In exchange, North Korea agreed to remain a member of the nonproliferation treaty and to allow inspections of its nuclear sites.

North Korea's devotion to communism and crop failures have contributed to the collapse of its economy and widespread famine. According to reports, more than 2 million North Koreans have died of starvation since 1995. International relief agencies have given more than $1 billion in aid. The United States has provided $300 million in food and fuel, while South Korea and Japan contributed $4.5 billion a year. However, the situation has been further complicated by worldwide suspicions that North Korea's government has been diverting much of this assistance to continue its nuclear program. Tensions between North Korea and the United

States resurfaced in 1998 when North Korea refused access to a suspected underground nuclear site. The government demanded that the United States hand over more financial aid to gain access—a request most observers viewed as extortion.

The Asian Economic Crisis

Following Japan's model, most Asian nations developed capitalist economies and became deeply involved in international trade in the 1980s and 1990s. The emergence of these powerful economies was called the "East Asian miracle" by some observers. However, in mid-1997, an economic crisis suddenly gripped the region.

Several developing Asian countries—Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines—were shaken when their currencies collapsed under bad loans and investments. Because of an unexpected trade deficit, the South Korean government was unable to pay its large foreign debts. Furthermore, Japan's economy, once one of the strongest in the world, has been in recession since the early 1990s.

Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea were all forced to apply to the International Monetary Fund

Reuters/Susumu Takahashi/Archive Photos

The devaluation of several Southeast Asian currencies in 1997 caused wild fluctuations in stock markets around the world. The Tokyo Stock Exchange, shown here, faced further troubles as financial scandals rocked the Japanese economy.

(IMF) for help in paying off their debts and improving their economic systems. The IMF agreed to provide financial assistance to each country in exchange for serious reforms in banking systems and government regulations. Economic growth in these three countries is expected to be slower during the next few years.

Economists remain concerned about the effects of the Asian economic crisis on the United States. The weakness of the Asian economy has created less demand for American-made products in the region, which could eventually cause an economic downturn in the United States. U.S. leaders have encouraged Japan, still the world's second largest economy, to lead the economic revival of the region and take strong, decisive measures, including tax cuts and banking reform, to turn its economy around.

CURRENT ISSUES

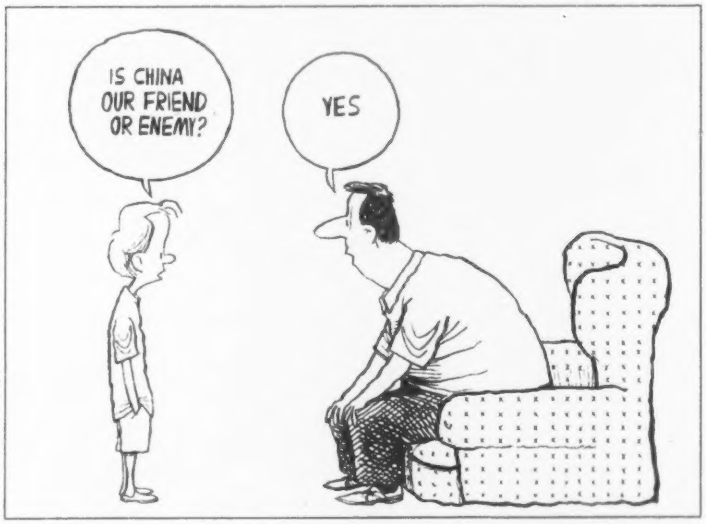
Human Rights versus Trade. Every year, the U.S. government reviews whether to renew most favored nation (MFN) status for China. Although Congress, at President Clinton's urging, has approved China's trade privileges every year this decade, the issue remains controversial.

China's long record of human rights abuses, such as suppression of free speech and imprisonment of political dissidents, has been the target of criticism by the Western world for years. Although President Clinton often encourages China to adopt more democratic reforms, the Chinese government usually responds that these issues are internal matters and therefore not the concern of the United States. Believing that cutting off special trade privileges would be counterproductive and harmful to the U.S. economy, President Clinton supports MFN status for China.

Some lawmakers believe that the annual review of China's MFN status no longer serves any real purpose. In 1998, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) said Congress should stop using the debate as a "rhetorical whipping post for whatever ails U.S.-China relations." Indeed, some experts believe that revoking China's trade privileges is not a credible threat because the United States wants to have access to China's huge market. Instead, many argue that the U.S. government should develop a more constructive approach to addressing human rights concerns in China and should permanently "delink" human rights and trade.

Many lawmakers and human rights advocates, on the other hand, believe that granting permanent MFN status sends the wrong message. They think that doing so would, in effect, reward China's oppressive regime and embolden the leadership to crack down further on dissent. These critics believe the Chinese government has not come close to improving its human rights record enough to justify granting it permanent MFN status. They argue that the threat of U.S. trade sanctions serves as important leverage in negotiations and should not be surrendered until China's leadership implements significant democratic reforms.

Relations with North Korea. North Korea's hard-line communist regime is seen by U.S. leaders as the most dangerous and destabilizing government in East


IS CHINA OUR FRIEND OR ENEMY?
YES

JEFF STAHLER reprinted by permission of Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc.

Asia. North Korea's quest to acquire nuclear capability and the widespread famine that has killed more than 2 million of its citizens make its government more unpredictable and, according to some experts, desperate. In August 1998, North Korea conducted a long-range missile test over Japan, provoking Tokyo to cut off food aid to North Korea. The United States has tried to engage this communist country by providing economic and humanitarian aid in exchange for assurances that its nuclear program has been abandoned. Many experts and lawmakers contend that this "carrot and stick" policy has not worked and that it is time to adopt a tougher stance toward North Korea.

Some experts and lawmakers believe the North Korean government is extorting money from the United States by granting access to suspected nuclear sites only in exchange for more economic aid. Skeptics in the United States have called for the suspension of all aid to North Korea until its leadership is more cooperative with inspectors and can verify the termination of ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programs. Proponents of this policy say North Korea must also begin to implement internal economic reforms that will reduce the devastation inflicted on its people by famine. Only then should the United States resume economic and humanitarian assistance.

However, critics of this approach argue that by taking away a key negotiating tool, such as economic and humanitarian aid, the United States would compromise its influence with North Korea's leadership. The communist state would become even more isolated and dangerous to U.S. allies. While advocates of the current policy agree that North Korea's government is untrustworthy, they believe it is still crucial for the United States to stay engaged in the situation—a policy that is supported by South Korea and other allies in the region. Critics further maintain that suspending

IS CHINA READY TO BLAST OFF?

In 1999, China was making preparations for the launch of a manned spaceflight, positioning itself to become the third nation to put a human in space. Only the United States and Russia can currently put their own astronauts into space orbit, using their own rockets. Chinese scientists also hope to launch probes to the moon and Mars early next century. Many Chinese officials believe that matching the accomplishments of Russia and the United States would advance their country's status as a global superpower.

U.S. humanitarian aid will only deepen the misery of millions of North Koreans.

U.S. Military in Japan. Ever since U.S. and Japanese leaders signed the Mutual Security Treaty in 1952, the United States has protected Japan with a large military force—currently 45,000 troops. This large U.S. presence, mostly stationed on the small island of Okinawa, has led to protests by Japanese residents. In 1996, U.S. military leaders agreed to return some land occupied by U.S. military bases.

Some Americans believe that the United States should close all its military bases in Japan. They point out that the Soviet Union has collapsed and that Japan's security is no longer threatened as it was during the Cold War. Many proponents say that Japan has a strong enough economy to support its own military, while the U.S. government can no longer afford to protect Japan. They point out that Japan has thrived economically—and has gained a large trade surplus with the United States—while the U.S. military has spent millions of dollars protecting Japan. Moreover, those who want to close the bases say that many Japanese citizens resent the U.S. military presence.

However, other Americans believe that maintaining U.S. troops in Japan is important to regional security because it offsets major powers like China and

AP Photo/Itsuo Inouye

In 1999, the Japanese government, in an attempt to spur the stagnant economy, began distributing $6 billion worth of shopping coupons (pictured here) to citizens. While praising the government for its bold experimentation, many economists doubted the plan would revitalize spending.

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Russia. In addition, they say that a military presence in Japan helps protect shipping lanes that are vital to the U.S. economy. Critics argue that changing Japan's defense structure would cause Japan to raise a bigger army, touching off an Asian arms race. When the Japanese army expands and its weapons stockpile grows, neighboring countries might increase their own weapons supplies because they might not trust Japan's intentions. Therefore, many U.S. policymakers believe that the United States should retain its military bases in Japan to avoid these potential crises.

OUTLOOK

The United States faces many obstacles as it redefines its relationship with this region of vital economic and strategic interest. Although Japan is an important ally in East Asia, some analysts think that in the long term, China will be a bigger player in the region. In the wake of the economic crisis, many U.S. policymakers believe that the United States must find a way to help economic reforms take hold in Asia, while managing trade imbalances and renewing the strength of the East Asian market. Many others are equally determined to end human rights violations in the region. As East Asia becomes more powerful and influential, American leaders are faced with the challenge of building cooperative relationships with nations that are so culturally different from the United States.

THE DEBATE: EAST ASIA

The United States should grant permanent MFN status to China.

PRO: Revoking China's most favored nation (MFN) trade status would be the economic equivalent to war and an action harmful to the U.S. economy. Because the United States has much to lose, revoking MFN privileges is no longer a credible threat. The U.S. government should end this annual debate and focus on developing more constructive means to address differences with Beijing. MFN is too important to use as a mechanism to air grievances about the Chinese government.

CON: The State Department's 1998 human rights report says that China continues to crack down on political dissidents and to violate other basic freedoms. Granting MFN status to China every year without review would, in effect, be a reward for its human rights abuses. The threat of revoking special trade privileges is valuable leverage and should be sustained. Offering permanent MFN status gives Beijing the green light to continue oppressing its people.

The United States should end foreign aid to North Korea.

PRO: Over the past five years, the United States has been "buying" North Korea's compliance to the 1994 agreement to end that communist country's nuclear program. U.S. policy has so far not created peace and stability in the region. Evidence suggests that North Korea is building a nuclear missile site underground and is diverting international food aid toward the military and power elite. It is time to put an end to this blackmail and adopt a tougher stance toward this dangerous regime.

CON: North Korea is an unpredictable country. It is wise for the United States to keep the channels of communication and engagement open. The economic and humanitarian aid is the best hope to contain North Korea. This assistance keeps U.S. policymakers at the negotiating table and has curtailed much of North Korea's nuclear ambitions. Cutting off aid will only result in more starvation for the Korean people and could provoke the government to lash out at U.S. allies in the region.

The United States should withdraw its troops from Japan.

PRO: The Cold War has been over for ten years, and the Mutual Security Treaty is no longer necessary. Despite its recent economic problems, Japan remains the second-largest economy in the world and can afford to provide its own defense. Moreover, the money spent on U.S. forces in Japan can be better spent on other national security programs. Many Japanese citizens oppose the presence of American troops in their homeland.

CON: The security of Japan is a key national interest of the United States. The United States should maintain a strong military presence in the area because Japan is still vulnerable to China and now North Korea. Moreover, other Asian nations distrust Japan and will increase their defense budgets if Japan adds to its own armed forces, triggering a possible arms race. To avoid these potential crises, the United States should keep its troops in place.

EUROPE AND RUSSIA

During the Cold War, Europe was divided into two competing camps: East and West. Eastern European nations were controlled by the communist Soviet Union, while western Europe—free and democratic—was allied with the United States. For more than forty years, the conflict between East and West dominated U.S. foreign policy.

When the Soviet Union broke apart in the early 1990s, the Cold War ended. Eastern European countries moved toward democratic and free-market economic systems, while western Europe—free from the Soviet threat—continued with its plan to integrate its economies into a "United Europe." However, old problems have been replaced by new ones. Throughout most of the 1990s, Europe has been plagued by economic and political problems. Ethnic hostilities in the former Yugoslavia—a problem many fear could spread to other parts of eastern Europe—have proven intractable.

The United States' relationship with Europe has always been important. In the post–Cold War world, Europe remains a key political and economic partner of the United States. However, balancing U.S. interests in Europe with Russia's policies in the region has become complex. Security issues, in particular, have been difficult to resolve. For example, noting Russian concerns, many criticize the addition of three former communist eastern European countries into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and condemn NATO airstrikes on Serbia. These critics fear a longlasting deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States be militarily involved in the Balkans?
- Should NATO expand its military reach?
- Should the United States change its policy toward Russia?

Europe and Russia continue to be vital to U.S. security and economic interests. Leaders from all sides are working to see that relations remain constructive into the twenty-first century.

BACKGROUND

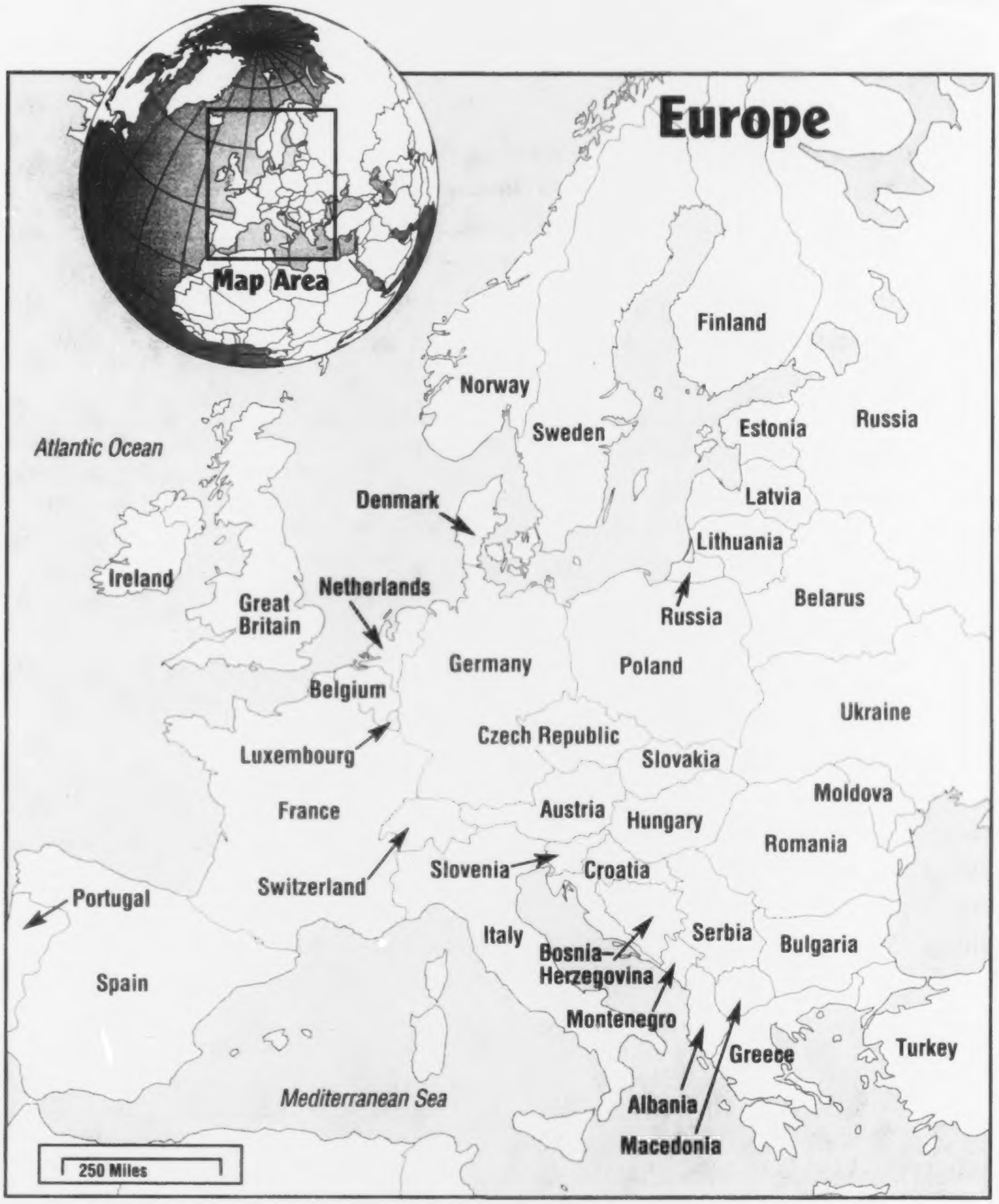
The Cold War

Europe Divided. In February 1945, before World War II had ended, British prime minister Winston Churchill, U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, and Soviet general secretary Joseph Stalin met in the Soviet resort town of Yalta to discuss the rebuilding of Europe. The three leaders agreed that when the war was over, both Germany and its capital, Berlin, would be divided into occupation zones: France, Great Britain, and the United States would occupy the western zones of Germany and Berlin; the Soviet Union would occupy the eastern zones. Stalin promised that free elections would be held in all the nations in Europe that his troops had liberated from the Nazis.

However, within weeks after Stalin's forces drove Nazi troops from eastern Europe, the Soviets established communist governments in Poland and Romania. Having been attacked by the Germans twice in twenty-five years, Soviet leaders sought to create a buffer zone—a geographic area under Soviet control, separating Germany from the Soviet Union. The Soviets soon forced communist governments on Hungary and Bulgaria, and native Communists seized power in Yugoslavia and

National Archives

In February 1945, British prime minister Winston Churchill, U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, and Soviet general secretary Joseph Stalin met in Yalta—a Soviet resort town in the Crimea—to set the stage for the post-war division of Europe.


Europe
Map Area
Atlantic Ocean
Norway
Sweden
Finland
Estonia
Russia
Latvia
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Denmark
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Great Britain
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Poland
Belgium
Ukraine
Czech Republic
Luxembourg
Slovakia
Moldova
France
Austria
Hungary
Romania
Slovenia
Croatia
Switzerland
Portugal
Serbia
Italy
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Spain
Montenegro
Greece
Turkey
Mediterranean Sea
Albania
Macedonia
250 Miles

Albania. The "Iron Curtain"—a heavily guarded border between East and West—had been drawn.

Germany became a divided nation. The United States, Great Britain, and France controlled the western part of the country and kept troops in West Berlin, a divided city located 120 miles inside Soviet-controlled East Germany. In July 1948, the United States

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announced the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). The Soviets responded by establishing the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in October of that year. The division of Germany into two nations completed the split between the democratic countries of western Europe and the communist countries of eastern Europe.

These events marked the beginning of the Cold War—a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union fought with propaganda, arms buildups, and the use of military and economic aid to win allies.

U.S. Policy of Containment. The United States tried to prevent further expansion of communism by "containing" it in areas that were already Soviet-controlled. Containment was carried out on three fronts: (1) economic aid to rebuild western Europe; (2) military assistance to governments challenged by communists; and (3) creation in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to provide security in western Europe.

The Marshall Plan and NATO. World War II left much of Europe devastated, its economies ruined, and its people desperate. A foreign aid program called the Marshall Plan (1947–53) provided billions of dollars in U.S. aid, investment, and trade to rebuild western Europe. U.S. officials believed that a healthy European economy would prevent a rebirth of fascism or an insurgence of communism, and that a strong European military would keep the Soviets from America's doorstep.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a U.S.-led military alliance, was established in 1949 to deter an armed communist attack in Europe. The twelve original members were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 1955, the Soviet Union and its east European allies—Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania—formed a counterpart to NATO called the Warsaw Pact. NATO and the Warsaw Pact stationed thousands of troops, tanks, and

AP Photo/Doug Mills

In April 1999, leaders of all nineteen member nations of NATO gathered in Washington, D.C., to celebrate fifty years of maintaining peace in Europe. The celebration was tempered, however, by the seriousness of NATO's campaign against Serbia.

combat aircraft on European soil and installed nuclear missiles aimed at each other.

Western Europe Comes Together. After World War II, European leaders believed that with the United States committed to defending their countries in case of Soviet attack, their efforts could be directed toward building an economic framework that would combine their economic and political strengths. Some even called it a "United States of Europe." Such an arrangement could foster mutual economic and defense policies that would make western Europe stronger in the face of the Soviet threat.

After attempts at unification failed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, western European nations in 1957 formed the European Economic Community, shortened to the European Community or EC. In some ways, EC members—Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom—operated as though they were one country. Member countries planned their economies to complement one another and, by establishing uniform trade rules and policies, worked together to strengthen European competition in the world market. EC policies helped create the economic boom that western Europe enjoyed during the 1950s and 1960s.

From the Berlin Wall to *Détente*. U.S-Soviet relations were extremely tense over the future of Europe in the 1950s and early 1960s. In 1961, the Soviet Union built the Berlin Wall, dividing the German capital and closing off access to West Berlin. This dramatic event solidified the division of Europe into competing camps. Later that decade, leaders in the United States and western Europe believed that it was time to engage the Soviets in constructive negotiations, which led to the policy of *détente* in the early 1970s.

Détente (a French word meaning "a relaxation of tensions") reflected the belief that, while the division of Europe was unlikely to change, both the United States and the Soviet Union would benefit from increasing cooperation and reducing conflict. Between 1972 and 1974, the two nations signed eleven agreements to cooperate in space exploration, agriculture, health, environmental protection, and other areas. Trade opened up, and American corporations and banks established offices in Moscow.

SALT I. The centerpiece of *détente* was the first Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) Treaty, signed by President Richard Nixon and Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev in 1972. The most important part of the SALT I agreement was its limitation of antiballistic missile (ABM) systems designed to intercept and destroy enemy missiles before they reach their targets.

Helsinki Accords. In 1975, leaders from the United States, the Soviet Union, Canada, and thirty-five European countries signed the Helsinki Accords. Under this set of agreements, the West—led by the United States—officially recognized the post–World War II borders of eastern Europe. In return, the Soviet Union promised to increase intellectual freedom and human rights within the eastern bloc.

SALT II. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter and Premier Brezhnev signed the second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) Treaty. However, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, President Carter withdrew the treaty from consideration by the Senate and boycotted the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. The Soviets felt betrayed, and U.S.-Soviet relations deteriorated.

New Soviet Leadership. When Mikhail Gorbachev became the Soviet leader in 1985, he immediately began a new cooperative phase in U.S.-Soviet relations. Gorbachev established more friendly and flexible relations with the United States, other communist states, and the Soviet people. He also introduced the policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring). Both policies sought to slowly introduce the Soviet Union to democratic ideals and economic reforms. The results turned the Soviet Union away from its hard-line communist past and closer to a free-market, democratic future.

The Breakup of the Soviet Union, 1989–91

Communism Falls in Eastern Europe. In 1989, communist governments in six eastern European countries gave up power after thousands of their citizens demonstrated in favor of democracy and free-market economies. President Gorbachev refrained from sending in troops to keep the communists in power as other Soviet leaders had done in the past. In Germany, the Berlin Wall—separating East and West Berlin—was torn down before cheering crowds.

The Reunification of Germany. When East Germany abandoned communism, the question of reunification with West Germany was immediately raised. The four victorious powers from World War II—France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the

AP Photo/Thomas Kienzle

In November 1989, thousands of cheering Germans gathered at the Berlin Wall to watch the nearly thirty-year-old symbol of the Cold War being torn down. By October of the following year, the two Germanys were reunified.

United States—and the two German countries began reunification negotiations in May 1990. When the Soviet Union agreed to allow a united Germany to join NATO, the final barrier to reunification fell. The economies of the two countries were joined in July 1990, when East Germany adopted the West German deutsche mark as its currency. Political union followed in October of that year.

Economic and Political Turmoil. Mikhail Gorbachev's popularity at home suffered as the Soviet economy deteriorated. In 1990, independence movements swept through the Soviet Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. When Lithuania and Latvia attempted to break away from the Soviet Union, they received worldwide support. However, Gorbachev sent Soviet troops to put down the movements. These events demonstrated that it was going to be difficult for Gorbachev to strike a balance between promoting democracy in the Soviet Union and keeping its fifteen republics unified.

By early 1991, six Soviet republics had declared independence. Meanwhile, the nine remaining republics demanded more autonomy. Eastern Europe was no longer under Soviet control, free-market economics threatened to dismantle communism, and the union was in jeopardy. In August 1991, hard-line communists in the government staged a coup, arrested Gorbachev, and took control of the country. Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic, immediately mobilized opposition in Moscow, which spread throughout the country. After only three days, the coup collapsed. Gorbachev returned to power, but his authority and credibility as a leader were gone. More republics announced their independence soon after the failed coup.

The Commonwealth of Independent States. Although Mikhail Gorbachev was prepared to give the republics more autonomy, he hoped to hold the Soviet Union together. However, on December 21, 1991, Russia's Boris Yeltsin and the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus created the Commonwealth of Independent States and declared the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev announced his resignation as the last leader of the Soviet Union on December 25, 1991, and relinquished control of the nuclear arsenal to Yeltsin. Eventually, eleven of the fifteen former Soviet republics joined the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Europe and Russia in the 1990s

The end of the Cold War brought about dramatic changes. Some were welcome, as democracy and economic reforms took hold throughout eastern Europe. However, old problems emerged as the region soon discovered that this new-found freedom and autonomy revived conflicts that the Soviet regime had suppressed.

Transformation in Russia. Because almost none of the basic institutions of a free-market economy—such as private ownership, regulations for business and industry, and banking and loan procedures—were in place when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Russia had to start from scratch. It had to contend with aging factories, the loss of raw materials to the now-independent republics that had previously supplied the Soviet Union's resources, and a workforce unaccustomed to the wage fluctuation and job insecurity associated with capitalism. These and other problems have led to vast problems in the Russian economy. Unemployment is high, the Russian ruble has lost most of its value, and many companies pay their workers with goods rather than money. Many employees go for months without getting paid.

To address Russia's economic emergencies, President Yeltsin introduced economic "shock therapy"—radical measures to quickly transform Russia's centrally controlled economy into a free-market system. Yeltsin instituted an ambitious privatization program to sell state-owned assets to Russian citizens and encourage worker ownership and entrepreneurship. An underlying purpose of the privatization plan was to build public support for Yeltsin's programs, but the results have not lived up to expectations.

Presidential Elections. Slow economic progress made Boris Yeltsin vulnerable as the 1996 presidential elections grew nearer. There was evidence that the Russian people were growing weary of Yeltsin's reforms. In addition, questions were raised about the Russian leader's failing health. However, after a hard-fought runoff election with the Communist Party candidate, Gennady Zyuganov, the voters reelected Yeltsin.

By 1999, despite financial help and support from the United States and huge loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Russia's economy fell into a state of near collapse. With parliamentary elections scheduled for 1999 and a presidential election slated for 2000 (Yeltsin announced that he will not seek another term.), international observers question whether reforms will survive if voters elect communist or nationalist candidates.

The Road to European Unity. As Russia and the other former Soviet republics struggled with their transition to democracy and capitalism, their neighbors to the west were working hard to integrate their economies. In 1985, European Community (EC) leaders decided to create a single European market where money, people, and goods could cross borders freely. This "Fortress Europe" would be the world's largest and wealthiest free-trade market and, many hoped, would usher in an era of economic prosperity for the whole continent. In January 1992, European leaders signed the Maastricht Treaty, which outlined plans for monetary union, the creation of a single currency, and coordination of foreign and defense policies.

However, the road to approving European unity hit major economic and political obstacles. Continuing economic problems across the continent soured many Europeans on the idea of economic integration with their neighbors. After bruising political battles in France and Great Britain over European unification, the Maastricht Treaty was finally approved by member nations. On November 1, 1993, the European Union (EU) officially went into effect, replacing the European Community.

The Euro. Eleven of the fifteen countries of the European Union agreed that they would replace their respective currencies with a single currency, called the "euro." The single-currency plan went into effect January 1, 1999, beginning with the trading of the euro on international exchanges; the actual paper notes and coins will not be introduced until 2002. At that time the euro will become the only legal tender in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Ireland, and Luxembourg. It will not be used in Britain, Denmark, Greece, and Sweden. However, many observers are skeptical that the euro can succeed, believing that the economies, political systems, and cultures in Europe are too fragmented to maintain a single currency. Others question whether the elected parliament of the EU will ever have enough influence to make the organization run smoothly or keep its fifteen independent members in line.

The Rise of Nationalism. Nationalism—a people's devotion to its religion, culture, or ethnicity—has been the catalyst for many modern world conflicts. In 1991, Yugoslavia fell victim to hatred generated by nationalism. Yugoslavia, first created after World War I by the merger of the formerly independent republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia, became a communist country in 1946. Tensions among Yugoslavia's ethnically and religiously different populations ran deep, but communist rule suppressed potential conflicts for nearly forty-five years.

However, after communism collapsed, Serbia, the largest and most militarily powerful of the Yugoslav republics, sought to unite the other territories under the

PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

In April 1998, representatives from Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, and Catholic and Protestant factions in the region signed a historic peace agreement designed to end thirty years of sectarian strife in British-controlled Northern Ireland. The plan, mediated by former U.S. senator George Mitchell, calls for the creation of an executive body made up of both Catholics and Protestants that will oversee substantial home rule for Northern Ireland. Implementation of the plan, however, was stalled a year later over the issue of disarmament of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, promised that it would meet the May 2000 deadline for disarmament and urged that the plan go forward. Shown here are the Irish prime minister Bertie Ahern (left) and British prime minister Tony Blair on the day the peace settlement was announced.

AP Photo/Barry Batchelor

NAZI'S SLAVE-LABORERS FINALLY GET PAID

In February 1999, the German government announced that it had secured an agreement with twelve large German companies to establish a compensation fund for Jews, Gypsies, and eastern Europeans who were forced to work as slave-laborers during the Nazi era. The companies, in hopes of avoiding huge class-action lawsuits, agreed to pay an estimated $1.7 billion dollars to about 300,000 surviving former slave-laborers. The participating companies include Bayer AG, BMW, DaimlerChrysler AG, Volkswagen AG, and IG Farben.

banner of "Greater Serbia." In June 1991, Croatia declared its independence and seceded from Yugoslavia. Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic sent troops into Croatia to stop the move, but Croatia won its independence after a bloody conflict. Soon the heavily Muslim republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina followed Croatia's lead and declared its independence. Encouraged by Milosevic, the Serb minority living in Bosnia declared war, with the goal of creating their own Serb-controlled country within Bosnia.

The world was shocked by the "ethnic cleansing" being carried out in Bosnia. Bosnian Serb troops murdered, imprisoned, and forced from their homes thousands of Muslim and Croat men, women, and children. After months of bloodshed and violence perpetrated by all sides, European and world leaders finally made resolution of the conflict a priority.

After almost four years of war that produced 250,000 dead and 3 million refugees, leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia signed a peace treaty (the Dayton Accords) that divided Bosnia into a Muslim-Croat federation and a Serb republic. In December 1995, President Bill Clinton sent 20,000 U.S. troops to be part of a NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

But violence in the region did not end. Ethnic Albanians—who make up about 90 percent of the population of Serbia's province of Kosovo—have for years been pressuring Serbian authorities to grant independence to Kosovo. However, Serbians claim a historical right to Kosovo. They point out that unlike Croatia and Bosnia, Kosovo was never an independent republic and is rightfully part of Serbia. In March 1998, Serbian authorities clamped down on Kosovo as riots and violence increased. A rebel fighting force called the Kosovo Liberation Army began to engage Serbian troops. As the fighting escalated, U.S. and European leaders began to pressure Milosevic to pull his troops back, give Kosovo more autonomy, and allow NATO troops in Kosovo to keep the peace. After peace talks collapsed in March 1999, NATO forces began air attacks on Serbian military and strategic targets to try to force Serbia to agree to NATO's terms. But when the bombing started, Milosevic quickly rushed more troops into Kosovo and systematically forced hundreds of thousands of Kosovar Albanians to leave the country. After more than two months of air attacks, the two

AP Photo/Jaroslav Pap

In March 1999, NATO war planes began a prolonged bombing campaign against targets in Serbia in an effort to convince President Milosevic to give autonomy to ethnic Albanians living in the Serbian province of Kosovo. NATO forces blasted this bridge over the Danube River in April 1999.

sides reached an agreement whereby Serbian troops would leave Kosovo, Kosovar refugees would be allowed to return, and international peacekeeping troops would patrol the region. However, analysts are cautious about long-term prospects for peace.

CURRENT ISSUES

The "Powder Keg" of Europe. For centuries, armies and cultures have clashed in that part of southeastern Europe called the Balkans—a region some historians have called the "powder keg of Europe." Muslim Ottoman Turks, Orthodox Christian Slavs, and Roman Catholics from the west took turns conquering and settling in the region. Not surprisingly, this volatile mixture of ethnic groups and religions repeatedly touched off battles to secure shaky national borders or subdue a neighbor. World War I was ignited by an assassination in Sarajevo—now the capital of Bosnia. Nazis, national partisans, and communists in the region engaged in fierce fighting during World War II. The events in Yugoslavia since 1991 only magnify the hatred and unrest that have plagued the Balkan region for many years. With the NATO attacks on Serbia and the presence of thousands of U.S. peacekeeping troops in Bosnia, many Americans question whether their nation has an interest in trying to bring peace to the region.

Some experts think that it is in America's national interest to protect Europe's political stability by restoring peace in Yugoslavia. Supporters of the American peacekeeping presence in Bosnia and military campaign in Kosovo believe that achieving and preserving peace is impossible without U.S. and NATO participation. They warn that allowing nationalistic conflicts in Yugoslavia to go unchecked could lead to further ethnic flareups in other Balkan states, including Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Hungary. President Clinton and other officials also assert that the United States has a moral responsibility to prevent future atrocities in places like Bosnia and Kosovo. Many characterize Slobodan Milosevic as a bloodthirsty dictator and argue that his attempted genocide of non-Serbs must be stopped at all costs.

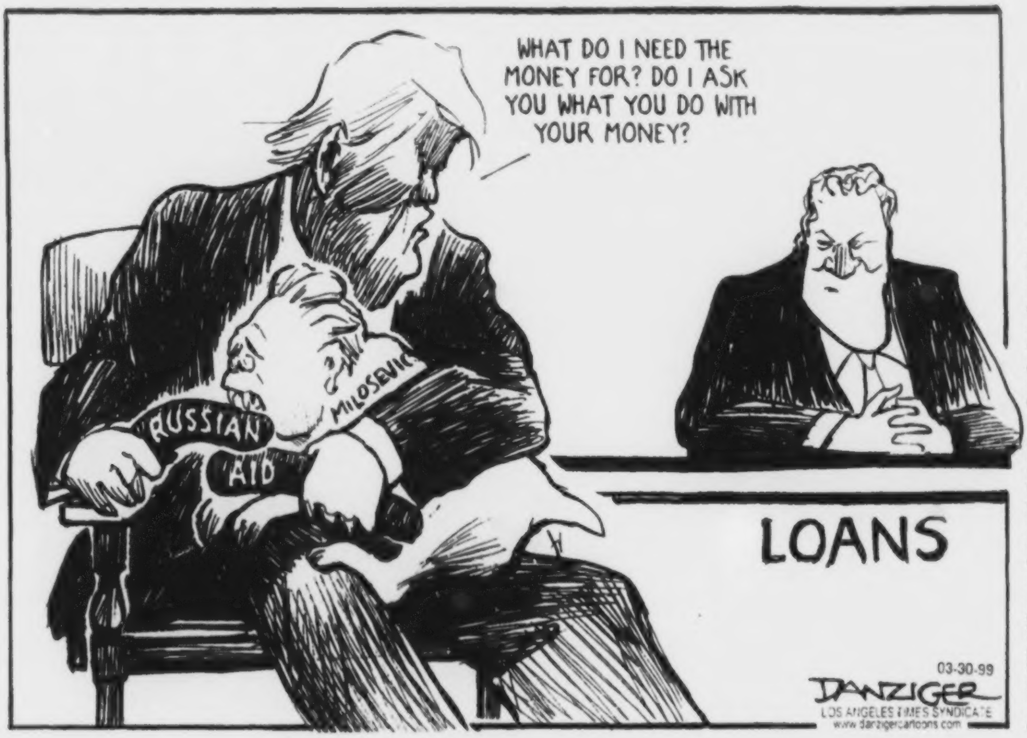
However, critics wonder what national interest is being served by risking American lives in an obscure southeastern European region. Many Americans believe that building a lasting peace in the former Yugoslavia should be the responsibility of European leaders—not the United States. Furthermore, some policymakers doubt that Americans want to continue to finance an American presence in Bosnia and are therefore reluctant to see U.S. troops getting mired in a fight among ethnic and religious groups that might go on for years.

NATO's Expanding Role. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed in 1949 to protect its members—the United States, Canada, and most of western Europe—from the Soviet Union. Countries in NATO agree to offer assistance to each other in the event of military aggression and consider "an armed attack on one . . . as an armed attack on them all." Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has given "partnership" status to many former communist eastern European countries and former republics of the Soviet Union. In March 1999, NATO added Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as full-fledged members. Many additional "partner" states have expressed a desire to join the alliance.

Despite being fifty years old, NATO's military action against Serbia, beginning in March 1999, was the first time its forces ever went to war. However, this action has raised questions about NATO's future. Some say the Cold War is over and NATO is no longer needed. Others believe NATO's role in Europe—and perhaps beyond—should be expanded.

Supporters of a broader role for NATO applauded its efforts against Serbia, saying it was about time the alliance—especially its European members—attempted to restore peace and order in the former Yugoslavia. They believe NATO is the perfect vehicle for enforcing standards of behavior in troubled areas of Europe and even in neighboring regions like the Middle East and North Africa, if necessary. Many American leaders also see an expanded role for NATO as a perfect opportunity to allow its European members to police their own continent with minimal U.S. help. Others think NATO is a more efficient organization to respond to trouble spots than the United Nations.

On the other hand, many Americans and Europeans fear an expanded role for NATO. They warn that Russia's distrust of the alliance may spark renewed hostility between East and West. They ask how NATO would respond if Russia tried to crush its rebellious province of Chechnya. Others say NATO should not even consider responding to violence or aggression in the Middle East or in other regions beyond Europe where conflicts are not European problems. Many residents of NATO countries say that the alliance has run its course—the Cold War is over, the Soviet Union is gone, and it is time to scrap this dinosaur.


WHAT DO I NEED THE MONEY FOR? DO I ASK YOU WHAT YOU DO WITH YOUR MONEY?
RUSSIAN AID
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A New Cold War? Americans and Russians alike approached the post–Cold War period with great optimism. U.S. officials were eager to help Russia build its new democracy and free-market economy. Russian leaders promised that, with aid from the United States and other developed nations, they would soon become a prosperous friend and economic partner. But Russia's economy has floundered and its government is struggling to address the many problems of the country. Along with Russia's internal strife, a chill has emerged in its relations with the United States.

The two nations have recently clashed over Russian aid to Iraq and Iran, U.S. plans to develop a missile defense system, an expanded NATO, and NATO military attacks against Serbia. The reluctance of the United States and other developed nations to give more aid and loans to Russia has added to the strain.

Some Americans think it is time for the U.S. government to cease helping Russia economically or politically. Such critics argue that it is time for Russia to solve its own problems. They resent Russia's hostility toward Western actions in Yugoslavia and its anger over the proposed U.S. missile defense system. Many U.S. leaders believe the aid and loans given to Russia have been used unwisely and that its economy is too far gone to be revived. They blame this failure on poor Russian leadership that is no longer worthy of U.S. political support. Some critics of U.S. policy toward Russia are convinced that Russia needs to work harder at solving its own problems before it can expect more help and good will from the United States.

Many U.S. policymakers say we cannot risk abandoning Russia or its government even though there is tension on several fronts. They argue that the United States needs a stable, prosperous, and nonaggressive Russia and that withholding help will not achieve those goals. American policymakers believe the United States can help the Russian government become credible by forgiving billions of dollars of loans it cannot repay, restructuring some Russian debts, and helping the Russians dismantle their nuclear weapons. These actions and others are necessary to assure the Russian people that NATO does not see them as an enemy and that the missile defense system is not being developed to shoot down Russian missiles.

OUTLOOK

The United States has made a firm commitment to provide peace and stability in Europe for more than fifty years. The Marshall Plan and NATO were established to protect western Europe from the Soviet Union. However, political and economic problems remain in post–Cold War Europe and Russia. In questions of military strategy, the United States must consider not only bringing peace and stability to Europe—particularly the former Yugoslavia—but also maintaining constructive relations with Russia. These goals will keep diplomats and American policymakers challenged well into the twenty-first century.

THE DEBATE: EUROPE AND RUSSIA

The United States should be militarily involved in the Balkans.

PRO: War in the former Yugoslavia—a war that could easily spread into other Balkan regions and beyond—threatens European stability, and the United States has a strong national interest in maintaining a stable and prosperous Europe. American leaders also have a moral responsibility to stop the human rights abuses—particularly ethnic cleansing—being perpetrated by Serbia's cruel president, Slobodan Milosevic.

CON: The United States has no vital national interest in the former Yugoslavia or the surrounding Balkan states. Building a lasting peace in the region is the responsibility of the Europeans, and now that NATO is involved in Serbia, the United States should turn over the heavy lifting to the alliance's European members. Americans cannot keep financing a war in a place where peace has been elusive for years.

NATO should expand its military reach.

PRO: By taking responsibility to end the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, NATO is finally asserting its military presence in Europe. NATO is powerful and unified enough to enforce standards of behavior in Europe and put down any threats from neighboring regions. A "new" NATO with more assertive European members will allow the United States to reduce its peacekeeping efforts.

CON: NATO was formed fifty years ago to counter Soviet aggression toward Europe. Now that the Soviet Union is gone, the alliance should not be expanded; it should be dissolved. Russian fears of an expanded NATO could touch off a new Cold War, and any NATO efforts beyond Europe could find European and U.S. troops fighting in a place where they have few national interests.

The United States should change its policy toward Russia.

PRO: The United States has gone far enough in trying to help Russia build its post–Cold War economy and government. Despite billions of dollars in U.S. aid, Russia has dissolved into an economic basket case that Americans cannot rescue. If Russia believes it can criticize U.S. policies around the world, it can also stabilize its own economy and government without U.S. help.

CON: The United States and the West need a stable and economically strong Russia. The Russians have made an honest effort to build a democracy and free-market economy, and now is not the time to abandon them. The United States and others should help the Russian government stabilize by forgiving and restructuring its debt and urging foreign investment in its industries.

LATIN AMERICA

Throughout the 1980s, Latin America—Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean—suffered through economic decline, war, communist insurgencies, and political instability. Greatly concerned by the region's problems, U.S. leaders provided economic and military aid to Central American and Caribbean countries to keep communism out of the Western Hemisphere.

However, in the early 1990s, Latin America underwent a dramatic democratic and economic transformation. Military dictatorships fell, popular elections were held, and free-market economies began to emerge. In light of its tumultuous past, the recent changes in Latin America have been remarkable.

Yet despite recent gains, some U.S. officials continue to have doubts about the stability and future of some Latin American countries. As has been the case with much of the world, economic problems have plagued important Latin American trade partners such as Mexico and Brazil. Many U.S. leaders are also concerned about the increasing influence of drug cartels in Latin American politics. However, others are convinced that these problems can be overcome and should not prevent the United States from expanding free trade beyond the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to include nations in Central and South America. The course of action that U.S. policymakers decide to take could determine the future of democracy in the entire region.

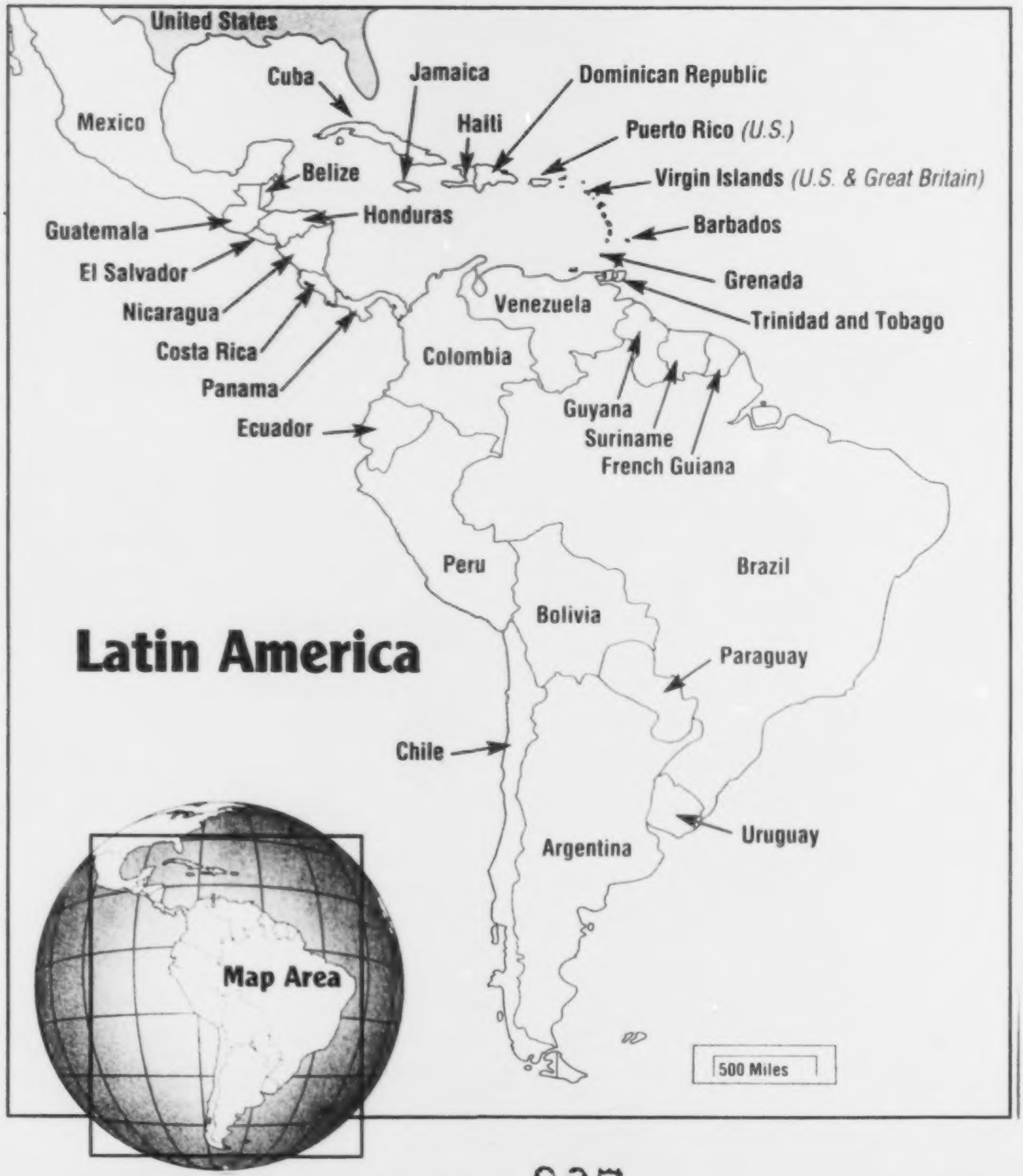
KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States lift the economic embargo against Cuba?
- Should the United States use military means to combat the Latin American drug trade?
- Should Puerto Rico become the fifty-first state?

BACKGROUND

Mexico

Although Mexico is part of North America, it has more in common with its neighbors to the south than with the United States and Canada. Nevertheless, Mexico and the United States have had close relations for most of the twentieth century. The two countries share a 2,000-mile border, and Mexico is the United States'


United States
Cuba
Jamaica
Dominican Republic
Mexico
Haiti
Puerto Rico (U.S.)
Belize
Virgin Islands (U.S. & Great Britain)
Honduras
Guatemala
Barbados
El Salvador
Grenada
Nicaragua
Venezuela
Trinidad and Tobago
Costa Rica
Colombia
Panama
Guyana
Ecuador
Suriname
French Guiana
Peru
Brazil
Bolivia
Latin America
Paraguay
Chile
Uruguay
Argentina
Map Area
500 Miles

third-largest trading partner (after Canada and Japan). In 1994, NAFTA went into effect, gradually phasing out barriers to trade among the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Politics in Mexico. Unlike many countries in Latin America, Mexico has a relatively stable government. Beginning in 1929, the Institutional Revolution Party, known as the PRI, held power for nearly seventy years. However, many believe that the PRI stayed in control through corruption and fraudulent elections. From 1988 to 1994, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari radically reformed Mexico's economy and helped negotiate NAFTA.

Still, Mexico's economy continued to lag during the Salinas presidency because its government funded economic growth primarily by borrowing money from other countries rather than by building domestic industries. Even though Mexicans earn more money on average per year than do residents in most other Latin American countries, many of its people are poor.

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León—also a member of the PRI—became president in December 1994 after what was considered a fair and open election. He promised to reform Mexico's economy and government. That month, officials lifted Mexico's fixed exchange rate against the U.S. dollar, bringing about an economic crisis. The United States and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave more than $50 billion in loan guarantees to stabilize Mexico's debt-ridden economy. By 1997 the Mexican government had repaid the loans. As a result, Mexico's economy grew and foreign investment in that country improved.

A Political Shake-Up. In July 1997, Mexican voters, for the first time ever, denied the PRI its grip on the lower house of Mexico's congress. Though it remains the largest party, the PRI lost the overall majority that enabled the legislature to be a "rubber stamp" to the president's policies. The opposition majority, the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), gained popularity by focusing its campaign on addressing the needs of Mexico's poor.

Embassy of Mexico

Mexico has made substantial strides in recovering from the peso crisis of 1994. Many observers have credited the economic reforms of Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo (pictured here) for the improvements.

Mexico and the Drug Trade. Every year, the president of the United States must notify Congress of which countries are cooperating in the fight against illegal drugs, a process called "certification." Those countries that do not cooperate face economic sanctions, including suspension of U.S. foreign aid. In 1998, some members of Congress remained concerned that Mexico was not doing all it could to stop the drug trade. That same year U.S. law enforcement officials estimated that 60 percent of the cocaine sold in the United States was shipped through Mexico. Bitter congressional debates, during which some members urged decertification of Mexico, strained relations between the two nations. Although U.S. leaders did certify Mexico in 1998 as they had every year since 1986, the question of how to curb the flow of illegal drugs into the United States continues to be a source of tension between the two neighbors.

Central America

Central America is a group of seven nations located between Mexico and South America. Many of the countries in the region have, at times, been ruled by military dictatorships and have endured civil war and poverty. In 1998, U.S. and world leaders rushed to give emergency and financial aid to parts of Central America—particularly Honduras and Nicaragua—after Hurricane Mitch caused billions of dollars of damage.

"CENTRAL" AND "LATIN" AMERICA

"Central America" is the term used to describe the countries north of South America and south of Mexico. These countries include Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. "Latin America" is a more general term that refers to countries in the southern half of the Western Hemisphere, where the people speak Spanish, Portuguese, and French—languages that derive from Latin. However, not all of Latin America is truly "Latin." For instance, Belize, a former British colony, uses English as its official language, and Dutch is spoken in Suriname.

Nicaragua. After forty-five years of dictatorial rule by the corrupt Somoza family, a civil war erupted in Nicaragua in 1977. The Somoza regime was overthrown by a popular opposition movement made up of a procommunist group—the Sandinista National Liberation Front—and several other political factions representing both impoverished Nicaraguans and the middle class. The Sandinista government, led by President Daniel Ortega, maintained close ties to the Soviet Union and Cuba and received millions of dollars in economic and military aid from those two nations. In response to Ortega's procommunist government, the United States enacted a trade embargo against Nicaragua and backed antigovernment rebels, known as the *contras*.

In 1989, Ortega agreed to a regional peace plan whereby *contra* forces would be disbanded if Ortega's government held democratic elections. To the surprise of many, Ortega lost that election to the U.S.-backed opposition candidate, Violeta Chamorro. In 1996, voters again rejected Ortega, electing right-wing candidate Arnoldo Aleman to the presidency.

South America

South America, the fourth largest of the world's seven continents, is made up of thirteen nations with great geographic, climatic, and cultural diversity. For much of the twentieth century, political elites—primarily military officers—controlled most of the continent's governments. Recently, democratic movements have brought free elections and free-market reforms to most of South America, opening the door for expanding diplomatic and trade relations with the United States and the rest of the world.

Colombia. The oldest democracy on the continent, Colombia has had to deal with political and criminal factions for more than forty years. Powerful drug cartels control much of the country that some have called the "cocaine capital of the world." Despite periodic government crackdowns, drug traffickers continue to wield considerable power and have been responsible for much of Colombia's domestic crime and terrorism. The nation's armed forces have, for three decades, also had to fight rebel groups seeking to overthrow the government.

In 1996 the U.S. government, concerned that Colombia was not doing enough to fight drugs, decertified Colombia and imposed economic sanctions. However in February 1998, the United States lifted sanctions, realizing that Colombian president Ernesto Samper—who had been accused of accepting money from a drug cartel—would soon be leaving office. The new president, Andres Pastrana, elected by a clear majority of voters and promising to install a new era of peace, met with rebel leaders—many of whom are financed by drug cartels—to look for a way to end the violence. U.S. officials hope that the Colombian people, under the leadership of a new president and government that they trust, will finally demand a more peaceful society and one that does not rely so heavily on drug trafficking.

Brazil. A former Portuguese colony, Brazil is the largest country in South America—larger than the continental United States. Democracy in Brazil is still young. In 1985, the country elected its first civilian president, after more than twenty years of military rule. A new constitution, drafted in 1987, reduced the role of the military to defending the nation against external threats.

In January 1995, Fernando Cardoso became president and proposed solutions to Brazil's deepening economic problems. However, economic difficulties continued. The United States and other industrial nations feared that Brazil would soon follow Asia and Russia into economic crisis or even default on its foreign loans. These concerns led to a $42 billion loan package to Brazil from the IMF and individual nations including the United States. Cardoso—reelected in 1998—promised that his belt-tightening program and the loans would revive Brazil's economy.

Chile. Like many other South American countries, Chile was for many years led by a military dictator, General Augusto Pinochet. In 1973, Pinochet staged a military coup and began reversing the socialist economic policies of the previous, democratically elected civilian government. Although his free-market economic policies brought more prosperity to Chile, Pinochet was a ruthless dictator. During his rule, more than 3,000 Chileans disappeared and died; thousands more were tortured and exiled.

In 1990, Pinochet ceded the presidency to a popularly elected government. Current president Eduardo

CONTROVERSIAL NEW PRESIDENT FOR VENEZUELA

AP Photo/Emilio Fuentes

In a vote that reflected a confrontation between rich and poor, former lieutenant colonel Hugo Chavez was elected president of Venezuela in December 1998. Chavez was a controversial candidate because six years earlier the former military leader led an attempted coup against the democratically elected government. He spent two years in prison after the coup failed. The United States is wary of Chavez's presidency because he may turn Venezuela—the United States' largest oil exporter—toward socialism and a closer relationship with Cuba.

Frei has continued free-market economic policies, while trying to bring the military under greater civilian control. Chile's thriving economy, low inflation and unemployment, and strong peso make it a likely candidate to join NAFTA.

The Caribbean

The Caribbean consists of a group of ethnically and culturally diverse island nations beginning near the coast of Florida and stretching to the northern coast of South America. Included are Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. The region, parts of which are a short boat ride away from southern Florida, has long been of interest to the United States.

Cuba. The large Caribbean island of Cuba, located just ninety miles from Florida, has the only remaining military government in Latin America and one of the few remaining communist regimes in the world. Cuba's leader, Fidel Castro, came to power in 1959 and quickly instituted a communist government.

By 1960, Castro's belligerent anti-Americanism, human rights violations, and growing ties to the Soviet Union had seriously strained Cuba's relations with the United States. When Castro seized U.S. assets in Cuba, President Dwight Eisenhower retaliated by stopping trade with the island nation. In 1962, the Cuban missile crisis prompted President John Kennedy to put U.S. military forces on alert until the Soviets agreed to abandon their plan to place nuclear missiles in Cuba.

When the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, Cuba's traditional lifeline of economic and political support was cut. Meanwhile, the U.S. trade embargo continued. Despite severe economic and social problems in his country, Castro remains committed to communism.

In March 1996, the U.S. Congress passed the Helms-Burton Act. This law allows U.S. citizens to sue foreign investors who utilize American property

Despite longstanding U.S. efforts to weaken and remove Fidel Castro from office, the Cuban president recently marked his fortieth year in power.

AP Photo/John Moore

seized by the Cuban government. In January 1999, President Clinton announced a proposal to ease the embargo. Included in the proposal are (1) expanding direct mail service and flights to Cuba; (2) allowing U.S. residents to submit up to $1,200 in remittances to individuals in Cuba; and (3) allowing cultural exchanges between groups in the two nations, including baseball games between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cuban national team.

Haiti. In 1804, Haiti became an independent country—the first Latin American country to win independence from its colonizer (France). However, Haiti is also the most impoverished country in the Western Hemisphere.

Throughout most of its history, Haiti was governed by authoritarian regimes. François "Papa Doc" Duvalier ruled Haiti from the 1950s through the 1970s; his son, Jean Claude, took over in 1980 but was ousted in 1986. In 1990, Jean-Bertrand Aristide became Haiti's first democratically elected leader.

However, Aristide was overthrown by the Haitian military in September 1991. The United States and the United Nations imposed an economic embargo on Haiti to pressure the coup leaders to step down and allow Aristide to return. As a result, several thousand Haitian refugees attempted to emigrate to the United States to escape the terrible economic and social conditions of their homeland.

The Haitian military finally relinquished power and Aristide was allowed to return in October 1994, with the assistance of troops sent to Haiti by the United States and the United Nations. In February 1996, political power was peacefully transferred from one democratically elected leader, Aristide, to another, President René Préval. However, Haiti's democratic institutions—government, civil service, and justice system—remained in tatters.

Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico became a U.S. possession in 1899, as a result of the U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War. Located east of the Dominican Republic, the island has a population of about 4 million, but nearly 3 million more Puerto Ricans live in the United States. Puerto Rico has the highest per capita income in the Caribbean, although still fairly low by U.S. standards. The culture is Hispanic; however, both English and Spanish are its official languages.

In 1952 Puerto Ricans voted for and received commonwealth status with the United States. Under the commonwealth system, Puerto Ricans can govern their country much like residents of the fifty states can. They are American citizens and subject to most U.S. laws, but pay no federal income taxes and cannot vote in U.S. general elections. Puerto Ricans do, however, elect one nonvoting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. In December 1998, Puerto Rican voters went to the polls in a national referendum to express preference for retaining the current commonwealth status, asking for statehood, or becoming independent. Statehood, with about 46 percent of the vote, came in second to proponents of retaining the commonwealth.

U.S. Foreign Policy in Latin America

Throughout most of the twentieth century, Latin American countries commonly had military leaders, communist insurgencies or regimes, closed economies, and poverty-stricken populations. During the Cold War, U.S. leaders implemented policies in Latin America to contain communism and to counteract conditions—such as poverty and economic decline—that encouraged Marxist rebellions. As democracy and market economic reform began to spread throughout the region in the 1990s, American officials developed policies to strengthen the economic relationship between the United States and many Latin American countries.

PANAMA GETS A CANAL

On December 31, 1999—after eighty-five years of American operation and administration—the United States will turn over full control of the Panama Canal to the government of Panama. The transfer will complete the terms of a 1977 treaty, negotiated by President Jimmy Carter in an attempt to improve U.S. relations in the region. While many Americans objected to "giving away" the fifty-mile-long waterway, others argued that it does cut through that country's territory and that there is no reason to think that the Panamanians cannot keep it operating smoothly.

Economic Aid. In the 1960s, President John Kennedy created the Alliance for Progress, an economic aid program that provided government funds for roads, schools, hospitals, and water projects. In the mid-1970s, the United States stopped giving aid to some Latin American countries after President Jimmy Carter accused their governments of human rights abuses. In 1982, Congress passed the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which gave large amounts of economic aid to the countries of the Caribbean and Central America, special duty-free status to products made in the Caribbean, and tax incentives to U.S. businesses that invested in the region.

The Reagan Doctrine. When he came to office in 1980, President Ronald Reagan began supplying large amounts of economic and military aid to U.S. allies in Central America, in an effort to curb the perceived threat to U.S. security from communist insurgents supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba. Reagan also sent U.S. troops to the small island nation of Grenada to quickly put down a communist rebellion there in 1983.

During his second term, President Reagan lobbied Congress for support for the *contra* rebels trying to unseat the communist leadership in Nicaragua. In 1986, a reluctant Congress approved $100 million in military and "humanitarian" aid for the *contras*. Later that year, the Reagan administration revealed that White House staff member Lt. Col. Oliver North had already secretly sent millions of dollars to the *contras* in Nicaragua without congressional approval, diverting profits from clandestine U.S. arms sales to Iran. This incident, known as the Iran/*contra* scandal, became a major source of controversy for both President Reagan and his successor, George Bush.

Promoting Free Trade. Many Latin American countries are now experiencing a period of democratic reform and economic growth. Economists attribute much of this revival to the promotion of free trade in the region.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect on January 1, 1994, lowering barriers to trade among Canada, Mexico, and the United States. The historic agreement gradually lowers and eventually eliminates tariffs on about 65 percent of U.S. industrial and agricultural exports to Mexico. NAFTA also gradually lowers trade barriers for automobiles, agriculture, and foreign investment.

Critics of NAFTA worried that American workers in certain industries would lose their jobs under international competition. Others were concerned that Mexico's poor enforcement of environmental standards would only worsen the severe pollution problems in the U.S.-Mexican border region.

Since its passage, policymakers have been divided over the true impact of NAFTA on the U.S. economy. After an initial boom in U.S. exports to Mexico, the peso crisis weakened the country's buying power and resulted in a large U.S. trade deficit. Although some American corporations did move their operations south of the border to take advantage of lower wages, many economists believe that the overall effect on the American job market has been minimal.

In 1996, U.S. officials considered making Chile, whose economy is strong, a member of NAFTA. Moreover, recent summits between the United States and other countries in Central and South America have developed plans for a "Free Trade Area of the Americas" by 2005. Supporters believe such a plan would create unprecedented economic and political cooperation between the United States and its Latin American neighbors and great opportunities for businesses and industries on both continents. Opponents of a hemispheric free trade zone, however, have the same fears as they had about NAFTA—the southern flight of American factories, which would thereby cause the loss of jobs in the United States.

CURRENT ISSUES

U.S. Relations with Cuba. During the Cold War, Fidel Castro's ties to the Soviet Union and his human rights abuses caused U.S. leaders to consider him a serious threat to the peace and political stability of the Western Hemisphere. The United States imposed a trade embargo in an effort to choke off Cuba's economy and weaken Castro's regime. Then, with the collapse of communist governments in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, economic aid to Cuba from these former allies also dried up.

Other governments in the world do not participate with the United States in the Cuban trade embargo. U.S. opponents of the embargo point out that many other countries do business with Cuba and that the United States is missing out on these potential profits. They believe that the embargo and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, which allows Americans to sue foreign companies that do business in Cuba, strain U.S. relations with other countries. Critics believe that the embargo has empowered Castro rather than weakened him because he has been able to blame American policy, not his own failed economic policies, for Cuba's poverty. Opponents of the American embargo argue that opening trade and travel relations, not closing them, is the best way to promote free enterprise and political reform in Cuba.

Those who want to continue the embargo decry Castro's record of political repression and argue that the United States should not deal with a regime that has such a poor human rights record. They also point to Castro's earlier goals of spreading communist revolution throughout Central America and his military support of communist rebels in the African country of Angola in the 1980s. They say that the embargo is working and that Cuba's faltering economy is weakening Castro's leadership and improving the prospects for true economic and political reform in Cuba.

The War on Drugs. For decades, U.S. officials have struggled to stop the flow of illegal drugs into the

Reuters/Zoraida Diaz/Archive Photos

The United States has supplied the Colombian military with millions of dollars worth of equipment to help in the fight against drug traffickers.

United States from Latin America. The sale and use of cocaine and heroin has been blamed in part for the violent crime, poverty, and homelessness in many American cities. Areas in Latin America, however, have suffered even greater costs. Many citizens there have become virtual prisoners of this illegal and deadly industry. In Colombia, for example, drug cartels have been responsible for numerous assassinations and bombings, giving the country one of the world's highest murder rates.

To combat these growing problems, some believe that the U.S. government should provide Latin American countries with military assistance to help eliminate the drug trade. They support increasing the presence of U.S. military personnel along the U.S.-Mexican border—a common point of entry for drug traffickers. Moreover, they favor funding antidrug military operations in countries where illegal drugs are grown, harvested, and distributed. For example, in 1997, President Clinton authorized sending about $37 million in military equipment to Colombia to combat the powerful grip of the drug trade in that country.

Supporters of using the military and giving military aid to fight the drug trade say it is the only way to put a stop to this lucrative and violent enterprise; they assert that stemming the flow of drugs at the source is the only solution. Because drug cartels have corrupted so many Latin American elected officials, the efforts of local governments have been ineffective. Proponents contend that coordinating U.S. military efforts with other concerned nations could also improve the chances that drug trafficking can be terminated once and for all.

Opponents of aiding military efforts in Latin America say the plan amounts to unwanted intervention in the internal affairs of independent nations. If the assistance is unwelcome, it could strain important U.S.–Latin American trading relationships. Funding military efforts in Latin America would divert valuable dollars from more-deserving and less-risky antidrug programs. The better way to eliminate narcotics trafficking, say these critics, is to stem the demand for illegal drugs in the United States through better education, increased economic opportunity, and domestic law enforcement.

Statehood for Puerto Rico? The political status of Puerto Rico has long been a burning issue for the citizens of this U.S. commonwealth. Many Puerto Ricans believe their island should become the fifty-first state; a significant number of others are happy with the present commonwealth system. Some think Puerto Rico should be completely independent of the United States. Puerto Rican voters have addressed the issue four times since 1967 in nonbinding referendums, with statehood gaining popularity with each successive vote. The last vote—in December 1998—saw nearly 80 percent of eligible voters in Puerto Rico go to the polls with about 46 percent favoring statehood. Although there were several choices on the ballot, most experts interpreted the results to show that a slight majority supports keeping the current commonwealth status.

AP Photo/Lynne Sladky

In December 1998, just over 46 percent of Puerto Rican voters, in a nonbinding referendum, said they wanted to become the fifty-first state. However, more voters appeared to be satisfied with the island's present commonwealth status.

Many Puerto Ricans say they are tired of being second-class U.S. citizens and deserve the same representation in Congress and benefits from Washington as do residents of the existing fifty states. They think statehood would be an economic boon for Puerto Rico, much as it was for Hawaii and Alaska when they became states nearly forty years ago. Statehood advocates say that U.S. investors would not hesitate to come to Puerto Rico if it joined the rank of state.

Opponents fear that Puerto Rico would lose its cultural identity if it joined the union of states, especially if English became the official U.S. language. Many do not want to lose their tax-exempt status, claiming that the present commonwealth setup works fine. Some members of Congress fear that the high poverty and unemployment rates in Puerto Rico would present difficult problems that U.S. taxpayers may be forced to alleviate. Furthermore, some Puerto Ricans believe that they should be completely independent of the United States because the cultural differences can never be overcome.

OUTLOOK

The United States' past involvement in Latin America focused on helping anticommunist movements through economic and military aid, including the use of U.S. troops. Today, the relationship is based more on economic, rather than strategic, interests. However, Latin America's democratic governments and their free-market reforms are still young and, in some cases, fragile. Whether Latin American leaders can stem the illegal drug trade and solve their economic problems will likely be a major factor in determining U.S. policy toward the region. Issues such as expanding free trade, stemming the flow of illegal drugs, and establishing closer ties with Latin America will stir serious debate among U.S. lawmakers.

THE DEBATE: LATIN AMERICA

The United States should lift the economic embargo against Cuba.

PRO: The embargo on Cuba was an effective policy to slow the spread of communism during the Cold War. But the Cold War is over. While the United States continues its embargo of this impoverished island, countries around the world are making money trading with Cuba. Trade with Cuba will promote economic and political reform faster and deny Castro an excuse for his failures.

CON: Fidel Castro has promoted revolutions in the Western Hemisphere and has violated the human rights of his people. He is a dangerous dictator, perched only ninety miles from the coast of the United States. Castro has become less of a threat only because the embargo is working. The United States should maintain the pressure until Castro resigns and true economic and political reform takes place.

The United States should use military means to combat the Latin American drug trade.

PRO: The cycle of addiction and violence created by the Latin American drug trade must be stopped. Only military intervention will put an end to drug-related crime in the United States and "narcoterrorism" in Latin America. Latin American governments have been corrupted by drug cartels and cannot be counted on to address these problems adequately. U.S. military efforts with other governments have already helped slow drug trafficking.

CON: Aiding military efforts in Latin America to combat drug trafficking will not solve the U.S. drug problem. Moreover, intervening in the military affairs of Latin American countries could strain relationships with these neighbors. Drug trafficking will only subside when the demand for illegal drugs has been eliminated. The money to fight drugs would therefore be better spent on education and treatment programs in the United States.

Puerto Rico should become the fifty-first state.

PRO: Puerto Ricans have been treated as second-class U.S. citizens for too long. They have turned their economy into the strongest in the Caribbean, an economy that would be boosted even more if Puerto Rico were to become a state. U.S. and foreign banks and companies would not hesitate to invest their money in Puerto Rico if it became the fifty-first star on the flag. The island state would bring a unique culture to the nation, just as Hawaii did in 1960.

CON: The language and culture of Puerto Rico is unlike any other state; it simply would not be a good fit. Puerto Ricans fear being forced to give up their native Spanish language and are reluctant to begin paying federal taxes. Despite the fact that it has the strongest economy in the region, its poverty and unemployment rates are much higher than even the poorest of the fifty states. U.S. taxpayers would have to spend billions of dollars to help make Puerto Rico prosperous.

THE MIDDLE EAST

For more than fifty years, the Middle East has been divided by war and conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The birth of the Jewish state of Israel in 1948 touched off a long period of violence, as armies from five Arab countries immediately invaded the new nation. Since then, Israel and the surrounding Arab states have fought four more wars over land sacred to their histories and religions, resulting in thousands of deaths and deep-seated mistrust. As Israel and its Arab neighbors wrestled for territories belonging to pre-1948 Palestine, the Palestinians themselves were left without a homeland and have campaigned for the creation of a separate Palestinian state ever since.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Should the United States support the establishment of a Palestinian state?
- Should the United States end economic sanctions against Iran?
- Should the United States use military force to oust Saddam Hussein?

Several nations, including the United States, have urged the Arabs and Israelis to make peace among their passionately divided peoples. After years of difficult negotiations, Israel signed historic peace agreements with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1993 and with Jordan in 1994. Israeli and Arab leaders now face the overwhelming task of keeping peace negotiations alive while controlling extremist groups that violently oppose the initiatives.

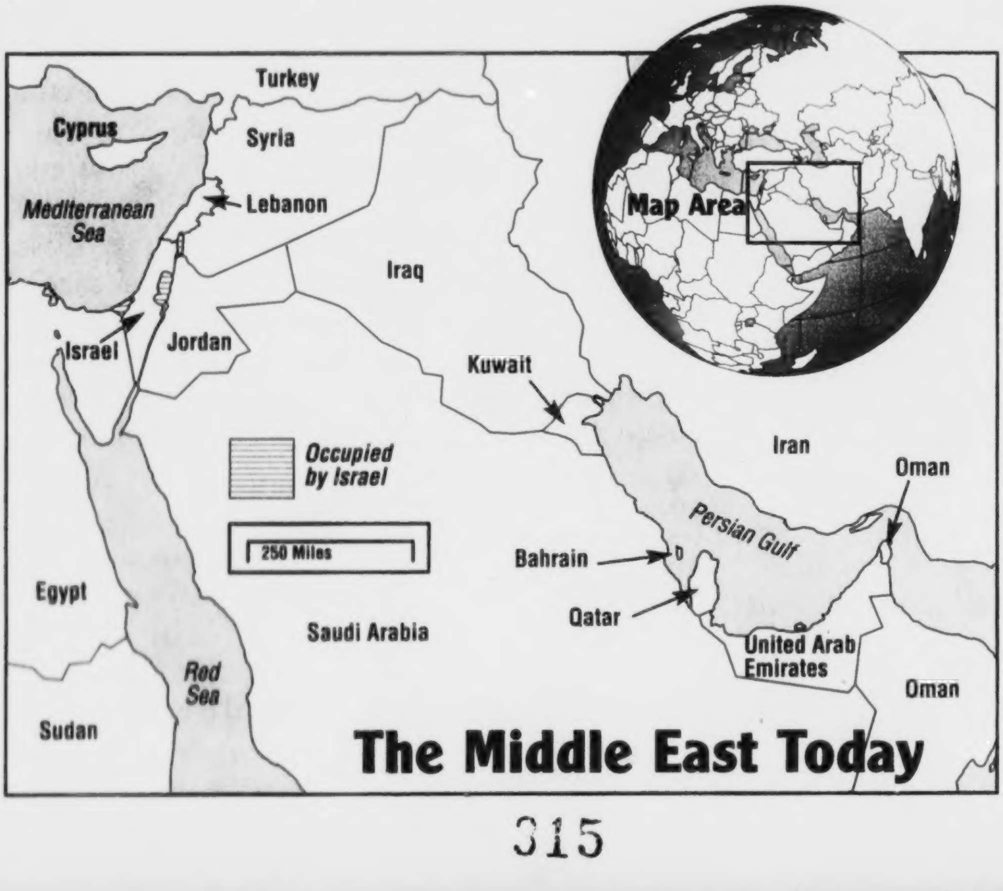
Meanwhile, U.S. officials work to develop a comprehensive policy for the region, one that encompasses not only Arab-Israeli peace, but also other complex issues. Saddam Hussein, the president of Iraq, continues to amass chemical and biological weapons in defiance of United Nations (UN) peace accords. The United States is also debating whether to normalize relations with Iran, a nation that many believe continues to sponsor terrorism around the world.

BACKGROUND

Key Players in the Middle East

Israel. Israel was formed from part of the Palestine Mandate—the territory of Palestine entrusted to Great Britain by the League of Nations following World War I. At that time, Palestine included areas now comprising most of present-day Jordan, Israel, the West Bank of the Jordan River, and the Gaza Strip.

The idea for what became modern Israel grew out of Zionism, a political movement founded in 1897 to establish a Jewish homeland free from persecution. Twenty years later, in the Balfour Declaration, the British government agreed in principle to a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Tens of thousands of Jews from around the world then began immigrating to Palestine, joining other Jews who had lived there for centuries. However, the Holocaust—the extermination of millions of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250 Miles
Persian Gulf
Bahrain
Egypt
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
United Arab Emirates
Red Sea
Oman
Sudan

The Middle East Today

European Jews by the Nazis before and during World War II—was the major reason the United Nations decided to create a Jewish state. Israel, established in the section of Palestine west of the Jordan River, declared itself an independent nation on May 14, 1948.

The United States was one of the first nations to officially recognize the new Israel. U.S. support was an outgrowth of American cultural and religious ties to Jews, the feeling of a moral obligation to help them establish a homeland after the Holocaust, and the belief that the new Israeli government would be democratic. Today, the United States gives Israel, its most reliable ally in the Middle East, about $3 billion per year in foreign aid.

The Palestinians. The Palestinians are now a people without a homeland. In 1921, the British gave the eastern two-thirds of Palestine to a non-Palestinian Arab king who then formed the kingdom of Jordan. When the western third of Palestine was partitioned after World War II, Egypt, Israel, and Jordan absorbed areas that had been intended to form a separate Palestinian state.

Conflicts in the Middle East have affected approximately 6 million Palestinians, who are now scattered throughout the region. Many live in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Other Palestinians have moved to Europe and North America. Some still live in Israel.

In 1964, Palestinian leaders formed the Palestine Liberation Organization to lead the struggle for the establishment of their own state. The PLO has used both violence and diplomacy in its efforts. In 1974, the United Nations granted the PLO observer status, which allows it to participate as a nonvoting member in the UN General Assembly.

In accordance with the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, Palestinians created their own governing body, the Palestinian Authority (PA), with a president, legislature, and police force. In 1996, Yassir Arafat, leader of the PLO, was elected president of the Palestinian Authority. The PA oversees areas of Israeli-occupied territories that were returned to Palestinian

The White House

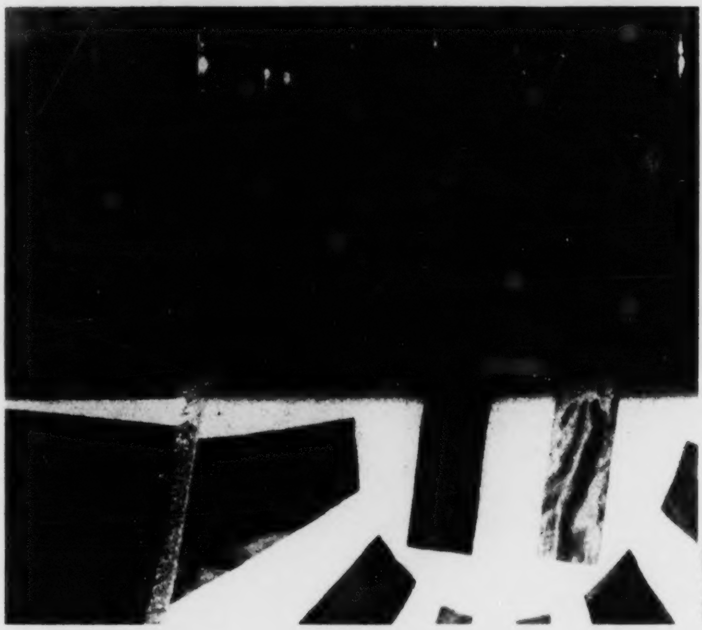
After the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979, Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat, U.S. president Jimmy Carter, and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin (left to right) clasp hands. The agreement led to an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

control under the 1993 accord. However, the Palestinians ultimately aim to govern their own homeland.

Egypt. The modern Republic of Egypt—the most populous nation in the Middle East—was established in 1952, when King Farouk was overthrown in a coup led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser. As president, Nasser established close relations with the Soviet Union and, by exploiting strong anti-Israeli feelings, attempted (with little success) to unify other Arab nations into a United Arab Republic (UAR).

After Nasser died in 1970, Vice President Anwar el-Sadat became president and dramatically altered Egypt's policies. For example, he asked Soviet military advisers to leave in 1973 and, in 1978, became the first Arab leader to negotiate peace with Israel. This overture caused most Arab countries to condemn Sadat; many broke relations with Egypt. In 1981, a group of Muslim fundamentalists assassinated the Egyptian president. Vice President Mohammad Hosni Mubarak replaced Sadat and has led Egypt ever since.

Jordan. In 1921, Great Britain established the autonomous region of Transjordan from the eastern two-thirds of the Palestine Mandate. In 1946, Transjordan became an independent Arab kingdom. Transjordan



In February 1999, King Hussein of Jordan died of cancer. Leaders from around the world attended his funeral. Here, President Clinton (far right) and former presidents (left to right) George Bush, Jimmy Carter, and Gerald Ford pay their respects at Hussein's coffin.

AP Photo/PETRA

annexed much of the area on the West Bank of the Jordan River and was renamed Jordan. From 1952 until his death in February 1999, King Hussein ruled Jordan. Widely respected throughout the Middle East, Hussein generally steered a moderate course in the region and played a pivotal role in urging Israel and Palestinians to negotiate for peace. Hussein's son, Crown Prince Abdullah, ascended the throne after his father's death.

Syria. Syria gained independence from France in 1946. In 1958, Syria united with Egypt to form the United Arab Republic. Egypt quickly became dominant, however, and in 1961 the Syrians withdrew from the UAR. During the next decade, Syria's government was unstable, until General Hafez al-Assad came to power in 1970. Assad, who is still president, improved his nation's relationship with the United States by joining the coalition fighting against Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Lebanon. A French colony until 1945, Lebanon is about 60 percent Muslim and 40 percent Christian. This population mix has made Lebanon more pro-

Western than many of its neighbors, but it also has made the small country a powder keg. In the early 1970s, Lebanon exploded into civil war involving Christians, Muslims, the PLO, and Syrian "peacekeeping forces." Lebanon's civil war left the economy and much of the country in ruins. Rival groups representing all sides agreed to a power-sharing arrangement in 1989. Under this accord, Lebanese leaders are trying to set up an effective government. However, Syria maintains 35,000 troops in Lebanon and has a strong influence over local politics. In 1996, Lebanon held its second parliamentary elections since the end of its civil war, but observers suspected that Syria manipulated the outcome to ensure the election of Syrian-backed candidates.

Meanwhile, Israel has occupied a nine-mile-wide strip in southern Lebanon since 1978, and occasional fighting in that area continues. Israelis refer to the area as a "security zone," which they claim they need to defend themselves against military attacks by radical Islamic groups. However, the Lebanese regard the presence of Israeli forces as an illegal occupation.

Iran. Iran is not an Arab country. Most Iranians are descendants of Persians, who ruled much of the Middle East for more than five centuries B.C. From

LIFTING THE VEIL

Iran's Islamic revolution in 1979 marked the beginning of strict regulation of the lives of women. Women in Iran are forbidden to go out in public unless covered by clothing—usually a black, veiled robe called a chador—that conceals everything but their hands and eyes. They are not allowed to go out after dark without the consent of their husbands and have no child custody rights following a divorce. However, in 1997, Iranian women voted in overwhelming numbers for Mohammed Khatemi, who offered hope for a more open and tolerant society. Iranian feminists hope that President Khatemi will repay his political debt to women by loosening Iran's restrictive policies.

the end of World War II until 1979, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi ruled Iran, modernizing his country with profits from an expanding oil industry. In 1979, religious fundamentalist revolutionaries seized power, and an exiled Shi'ite Muslim leader, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, became Iran's leader.

Khomeini condemned the United States for supporting the shah, whom Khomeini said had corrupted Iran by "Westernizing" it and moving it away from strict Islamic observance. In November of that year, Iranian terrorists seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran, taking sixty-six Americans hostage—an incident that turned Iran into an enemy of the United States. The hostages were released in January 1981.

When Khomeini died in 1989, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani became Iran's president. Generally less antagonistic toward the United States, Rafsanjani made economic and diplomatic overtures to Western industrialized countries. In May 1997, Iranians elected Mohammed Khatemi as their new president. A moderate who wants to modernize Iran, Khatemi has expressed an interest in trying to build a better relationship with the United States, although the two countries still do not have diplomatic relations. Many U.S. officials believe that Iran is intent on becoming the dominant military and religious power in the Middle East.

Iraq. Located in the "fertile crescent" between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers where Western civilization was born, Iraq's capital of Baghdad was long the center of Arab culture. From the seventeenth century until the end of World War I, the Ottoman Turks controlled Iraq.

After World War I, Great Britain occupied Iraq under a League of Nations mandate. The British installed a king in 1932 but maintained strong influence over the government. In 1958, the king was overthrown in a military coup. The current Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, is not a military officer but is supported by his country's army.

In a 1980 territorial dispute, Iraq attacked its neighbor, Iran, beginning a brutal war that lasted eight years. In 1990, Saddam Hussein's armies invaded a smaller neighbor, Kuwait, claiming that Kuwait was rightfully part of Iraq. A U.S.-led armed coalition expelled Iraq from Kuwait in early 1991, but Saddam Hussein has maintained leadership of Iraq. The United States has kept a watchful eye on the Iraqi leader. After the war, Iraq was required to hand over all its weapons of mass destruction and dismantle all weapons-producing sites. However, throughout most of the decade, Saddam Hussein has continually refused to allow UN inspectors to examine suspected sites. His defiance frequently leads to U.S. military action to force Iraq's compliance.

Conflict in the Middle East

Establishment of Israel. The modern nation of Israel was born out of the 1947 United Nations partition plan, which proposed that two countries—one for Arabs and one for Jews—be formed from one territory, Palestine. Although it had been many centuries since

Reuters/Reinhard Krause/Archive Photos

Iraq's refusal to grant UN inspectors access to suspected weapons sites has led to U.S. air strikes against Iraqi targets. In December 1998, U.S. bombers destroyed several buildings in Iraq. The rubble shown here was once a Baghdad telecommunications center.

Jews controlled Palestine, many Jews believed that the land was rightfully theirs, saying that God had given it to them thousands of years ago.

While most of the international community supported Israel's right to exist, few Arabs did. The land that the Arab people and their ancestors had occupied for centuries was suddenly given to another group of people. Many Arabs continue to view Israel as the intruder that took away the Palestinians' ancestral home.

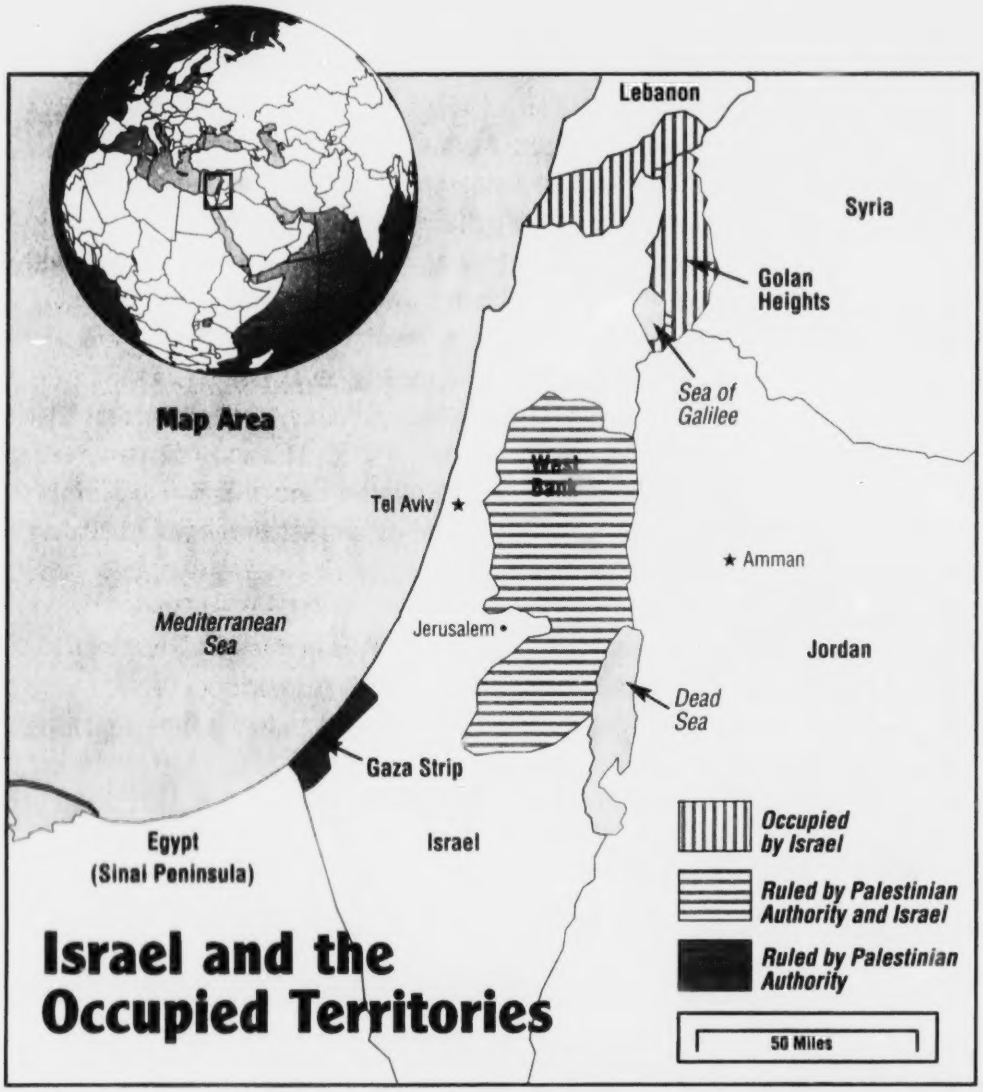
On May 15, 1948, the day Israeli statehood took effect, soldiers from Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq crossed into the new nation, touching off the first Arab-Israeli war. The cease-fire lines of that war became Israel's tentative border. Since then, Israel and the surrounding area have been rocked by a series of wars.

The Six-Day War of 1967 is perhaps the region's most historic conflict. Fearing that Egypt was preparing to strike, Israel launched a surprise attack on June 5, 1967, defeating Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. Over a period of six days, Israel captured the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank of the Jordan River, and the eastern half of Jerusalem.

UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. During the 1960s and 1970s, the United Nations adopted two resolutions that attempted to establish the principles for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East. In 1967, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 242, calling for an end to all declarations of war and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from territories captured from the Arabs. In addition, Israel and the Arab states were to respect one another's independence and right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. The resolution also called for a "just settlement" of the Palestinian refugee problem. Advancing a step further, in 1973 the United Nations passed UN Security Council Resolution 338, which states that Resolution 242 proposals should be pursued through negotiations.

Egyptian-Israeli Peace. On November 19, 1977, Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat became the first Arab leader to visit Israel. Sadat's trip helped the Israeli and Egyptian peoples overcome some of the psychological barriers of fear, hatred, and suspicion between them.

In 1978, Sadat met with Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin and U.S. president Jimmy Carter at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland. These talks led to the signing of an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979, ending the thirty-one-year conflict between the two enemies.


Map Area
Lebanon
Syria
Golan Heights
Sea of Galilee
West Bank
Tel Aviv
Amman
Jerusalem
Jordan
Mediterranean Sea
Dead Sea
Gaza Strip
Egypt (Sinai Peninsula)
Israel
Occupied by Israel
Ruled by Palestinian Authority and Israel
Ruled by Palestinian Authority
50 Miles

Israel and the Occupied Territories

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Since Israel was established in 1948, most Palestinians have fled from Israeli-held areas to neighboring Arab territory. Some Palestinians have vowed to destroy Israel and establish a country of their own in its place. Others, however, are tired of the ravages of war and would like to settle the issue of a Palestinian homeland peaceably.

In December 1987, the first of a series of uprisings—known as the *intifada*—erupted to protest the presence of Israeli soldiers in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinians wanted the Israelis to leave and allow the Palestinians to establish a homeland. More than 800 people were killed during the *intifada*, which ended in 1993.

In 1991 and 1992, U.S.-led efforts in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks on the West Bank and Gaza Strip reached a stalemate. The Palestinians refused to accept Israel's offer of limited self-rule, and Israel insisted on settling the West Bank and Gaza Strip with newly arriving Jewish immigrants from Russia.

The Middle East Peace Process. Israel and the PLO reached a historic peace agreement—known as the Oslo Accords—in September 1993. The accord's two most important provisions included agreements to establish a five-year interim period of limited autonomy for Palestinians in the occupied territories and to withdraw Israeli forces from Palestinian areas of the West Bank. Those areas are to be policed by Palestinians and overseen by the newly created Palestinian Authority.

By early 1996, Israeli soldiers had left the Gaza Strip, as well as six cities and more than 400 towns in the West Bank. In January of that year, Palestinians held their first elections for a president and a national assembly in areas overseen by the Palestinian Authority. Yassir Arafat, leader of the PLO, was elected president.

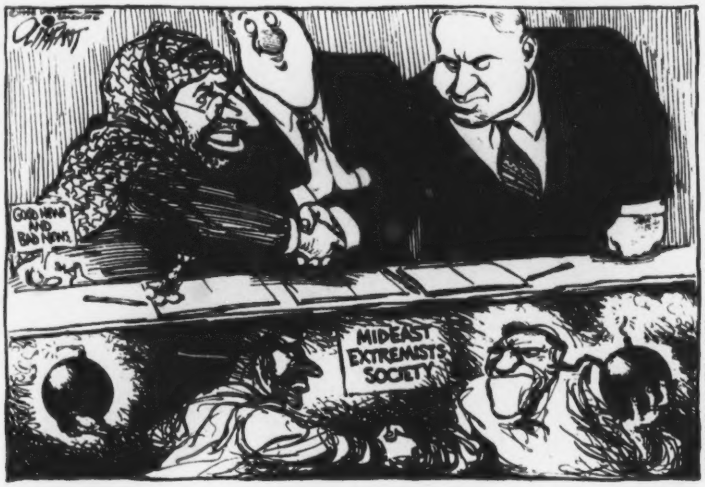
While leaders began to implement the Israeli-PLO peace accord in 1994 and 1995, terrorist activity increased. Observers said that extremists on both sides aimed to destroy the peace plan. In November 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli who opposed the peace process.

Hope and Despair. In May 1996, Israelis elected a member of the conservative Likud Party, Benjamin Netanyahu, as their new prime minister. Following his campaign rhetoric denouncing land-for-peace agreements with Arabs, Netanyahu slowed the process for returning some areas of the West Bank to Palestinian control. Meanwhile, he encouraged Israeli settlements in occupied territories, a policy that Arabs said violated previous agreements.

As a result of rising tensions, the peace process bogged down in 1996. Fundamentalist groups launched terrorist attacks on Jews, and Israeli troops cracked down on Arabs—events that left many wondering if Middle East peace was attainable. Efforts to revive the negotiations produced few results, and more violence in 1997 threatened to nullify the peace process entirely.

In January 1998, President Bill Clinton hosted extended talks with both Netanyahu and Arafat. Despite the president's attempts to help guide the peace process, progress remained at a standstill. Netanyahu refused to further withdraw Israeli troops from the West Bank until Arafat put an end to Palestinian terrorist attacks. Arafat insisted that his government did not encourage such attacks and that he was powerless to move forward with peace negotiations until Israel fulfilled its promise to leave the West Bank.

In October 1998, a breakthrough revitalized the peace process. President Clinton hosted a summit in Wye River, Maryland, between Netanyahu and Arafat. Long and intense negotiations produced an agreement that committed Israel to exchange land for concrete steps from the Palestinians to secure Israel from political violence. The Wye River Accord specified that Israel turn over an additional portion of the West Bank to Palestinian control and release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners from its jails. The Palestinians agreed to revoke anti-Israel paragraphs from their charter and arrest thirty suspects wanted by the Israeli government for murder.



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However, Arafat soon accused Netanyahu of delaying implementation of the agreement and threatened to declare Palestinian statehood on May 4, 1999—the day when the five-year interim period of self-rule, established under the 1993 Oslo accords, expired. Many observers believed that Netanyahu's inaction in implementing the Wye agreement was a political ploy to win over Israeli's right wing. However, in May 1999, Netanyahu was defeated by Ehud Barak in the Israeli elections. Some analysts believed that Israelis had grown impatient with the dimming prospects for peace. Barak has indicated that he will pursue a more moderate course in upcoming peace negotiations.

CURRENT ISSUES

Establishment of a Palestinian Homeland. The Palestinians hope that the Middle East peace process will eventually result in an independent Palestinian state. Palestinian officials expect that they will eventually be given full autonomy over the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Yassir Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Authority, believes that the 1993 agreement with Israel sowed the seeds of full Palestinian statehood. However, Israeli leaders have historically opposed that idea because they fear the new nation would be used as a staging ground to attack Israel. Instead, some Israeli leaders have suggested that Palestinians form a confederation with Jordan or even Israel. They note that a Palestinian state in Gaza and on the West Bank might not survive on its own because the area is small, lacks a strong agricultural or industrial base, and has few natural resources.

Nevertheless, many Palestinians reject the idea of relying on another nation for their economic and military survival. Some Palestinians would be dissatisfied with anything less than total independence and might continue to fight Israel. Supporters therefore argue that a Palestinian state is the only hope for long-term Arab-Israeli peace.

Israeli and Palestinian officials hope to resolve the statehood conflict during ongoing negotiations. However, sensitive issues—including who will control the holy city of Jerusalem—present formidable obstacles to peace. Israelis want the city to stay united and become their capital. However, Palestinians view East Jerusalem, a mostly Arab section of the city that Israel captured during the 1967 war, as their future capital.

Rapprochement with Iran? Since his election in 1997, Iranian President Mohammed Khatemi has reached out to Western nations, hoping to end his country's isolation. Khatemi's visit to Europe in March 1999—the first by an Iranian leader in twenty

A PARCHED PEACE

Water is becoming a scarce and disputed commodity throughout the Middle East. A recent study predicted that the region will experience an annual water shortage of 41 trillion gallons by 2000 and 90 trillion gallons by 2020. The West Bank's water source is the largest reservoir for Israel. Palestinian leaders accuse the Israeli government, who control the water supply, of restricting many Palestinian families' access to this water. Israeli and Palestinian counterclaims over these underground water supplies along the West Bank could threaten long-term prospects for any peace settlement.

In March 1999, Iranian president Mohammed Khatemi (pictured here) traveled to Europe, a visit that underscored his interest in reaching out to Western nations.

Reuters/Aladin Abdel Naby/Archive Photos

years—was seen as a bold step in developing constructive relations with U.S. allies. Many experts believe that Khatemi's overtures to the West and his plans to open up Iranian society could lead to a reconciliation between the United States and Iran. In 1997, President Clinton sent a telegram to the new Iranian president, noting that while serious differences remained between the two nations, they were not "insurmountable." However, the United States still views Iran as a threat to U.S. national security.

Nevertheless, some foreign policy experts are calling on the Clinton administration to establish formal ties with Iran and begin a new era of cooperative relations. Specifically, many believe the time has come for the United States to lift economic sanctions against Iran, which they argue have actually backfired. While Iran's economy has suffered, the effects of these sanctions have been blunted by the refusal of many U.S.

allies to support the policy. In addition, critics claim that the embargo is hardening anti-American sentiment in Iran, making it politically difficult for Khatemi to institute reforms to modernize Iranian society. These sanctions have also locked many U.S. companies out of a potentially lucrative market, from which Europe, China, and Japan continue to profit.

While crediting Khatemi for trying to create a more open society in Iran, U.S. leaders say that the gap between the two nations remains wide. President Clinton argues that Iran still promotes policies that are unacceptable to the United States and a threat to its national interests. Iran still refuses to recognize Israel and opposes the Middle East peace process. Additionally, according to many lawmakers, Iran's sponsorship of terrorism and effort to develop long-range missiles—which soon might be equipped with nuclear warheads—pose serious threats to U.S. national security. Therefore, they believe that the U.S. economic embargo must stay in place until Iran reverses these policies.

Time for Saddam Hussein to Go? Since the end of the Persian Gulf War in March 1991, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein has refused to comply properly with UN resolutions requiring his country to dismantle its nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons programs. The United States and other countries are convinced that Iraq is continuing to try to manufacture these weapons of mass destruction. Because of Saddam Hussein's failure to comply with UN resolutions, Iraq has remained under stiff international economic sanctions and has been the target of U.S. military air strikes on many occasions.

Many experts argue that it is time to launch a military attack against Iraq with the explicit goal of removing Saddam Hussein from power. His determination to amass dangerous weapons makes the Iraqi leader a threat to peace in the Middle East. Proponents say a sustained military attack would weaken Hussein's personal security forces and demoralize his supporters, thus encouraging and enabling his enemies to overthrow him. They say that even targeting Hussein directly is better than allowing him to threaten world peace by building nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Opponents of an attack believe that even if Saddam Hussein were overthrown, he would likely be replaced by another antagonistic leader. Critics also say that launching a military attack would put too many American soldiers at risk. It might even prompt Iraq to use some of its chemical and biological weapons, thereby endangering the citizens of neighboring countries in the Gulf. Some experts believe that leaving the sanctions in place will eventually force the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam Hussein if he fails to comply with the UN resolutions. Furthermore, many experts point out that targeting Hussein is tantamount to assassination, which is illegal under U.S. and international law.

OUTLOOK

The task of bringing peace to the Middle East is complicated by many factors—most of which stem from hundreds of years of religious and ethnic conflict, as well as modern-day military ambitions. Implementation of new peace agreements between Israel and the Palestinians will continue to pose challenges for Middle Eastern people, as the two most contentious issues—Palestinian statehood and the security of Israel—are addressed. Moreover, U.S. policymakers continue to grapple with Saddam Hussein—a seemingly interminable conflict that has drained the patience of many lawmakers who are now calling for more decisive action. Although relations with Iraq remain tense, many believe that U.S. relations with Iran may well improve in the coming years as that country's moderate leadership reaches out to the West. Until then, the situation, like the Middle East as a whole, remains volatile.

THE DEBATE: THE MIDDLE EAST

The United States should support the establishment of a Palestinian state.

PRO: The Arab-Israeli conflict will never be resolved fully until a Palestinian state is established. Such a state would meet the Palestinian's demands to govern themselves. The United States should support the spirit of the original United Nations partition plan, which calls for the establishment of two nations, one Arab and one Israeli.

CON: Creating a Palestinian state will not solve the problems in the Middle East. Some Palestinians are firmly committed to taking back the territory that is now Israel. They are likely to use a Palestinian state as a staging ground for terrorist attacks, and they might use such a state to conspire with other Arab nations to destroy Israel.

The United States should end economic sanctions against Iran.

PRO: President Khatemi is taking constructive steps to open up Iranian society and do business with the West. The United States should acknowledge this progress by lifting the embargo. This outdated and counterproductive policy has locked U.S. businesses out of a potentially lucrative market and has inflamed anti-American forces inside Iran. Iran is changing; the United States should change also.

CON: The embargo should remain until President Khatemi's actions follow his words. Iran continues to support terrorism and amass weapons of mass destruction. By ending the economic embargo, the United States is in effect giving Iran the green light to continue these policies. When Iran is ready to become a responsible member of the international community, then the United States will be ready to normalize relations.

The United States should use military force to oust Saddam Hussein.

PRO: Iraq will remain a menace in the Middle East as long as Saddam Hussein is in power. He has built an arsenal of weapons that threaten not only U.S. allies in the region, but also the entire world. A strong U.S. military offensive will demoralize Saddam's supporters and encourage his enemies to overthrow him. If necessary, the U.S. military should target Saddam directly—a last resort that is preferable to allowing him to stay in power, letting his people suffer under sanctions, and continuing to defy international nonproliferation laws.

CON: Launching a military attack to remove Saddam Hussein from power will only create more chaos. The Iraqi leader could be replaced by another rogue leader. In addition, such an operation is likely to result in heavy casualties. The best approach is to keep the pressure on with economic sanctions and use military force sparingly to contain Saddam's nuclear ambitions. Furthermore, targeting a head of government for assassination tells the world that the United States condones political assassination.

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Close Up's Civic Education Programs

The programs of the Close Up Foundation represent a diverse approach to citizenship education, teaching Americans about democracy and giving them the skills to play an active role in their government and their communities. From Washington, D.C., to social studies classrooms nationwide, Close Up is committed to increasing civic awareness—one student, one citizen, at a time. Close Up's educational offerings include:

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Close Up Washington—Close Up's flagship government studies program in the nation's capital prepares high school students to meet the challenge of governing themselves and their nation.

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Close Up Program for New Americans—This civic education and community service-learning program features a weeklong Washington study visit for recently immigrated and migrant students and their teachers.

Close Up Capital Experience—Close Up's program for middle school students and teachers features in-depth study visits to historic sites and workshops focusing on conflicts in U.S. history.

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Current Issues

Teacher's Guide

Developed by Charles R. Sass

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Close Up Foundation

The Close Up Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, informs, inspires, and empowers people to exercise the rights and accept the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Close Up connects individuals of all ages to their communities and institutions through challenging educational programs and products. By building partnerships with the education community, the private and philanthropic sectors, and all branches and levels of government, Close Up makes civic participation a dynamic and meaningful experience.

Close Up's Civic Education Programs

From the nation's capital to social studies classrooms nationwide, Close Up is committed to increasing civic awareness—one student, one citizen, at a time. Close Up's educational offerings include:

In Washington, D.C. . . .

Close Up Washington—a government studies program for nearly 25,000 high school students and teachers each year; the Foundation's flagship program and a capital tradition

Lifelong Learning Series—a civic learning program for adults, offered in cooperation with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

Close Up Program for New Americans—a civic education and service-learning program with a weeklong Washington study visit for recently immigrated and migrant students and their teachers

Close Up Capital Experience—a program for middle school students and teachers, featuring in-depth study visits to historic sites and workshops focusing on conflicts in U.S. history

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Close Up Connections: State and Local Programs—community-based civic education and current issues programs, conducted by volunteer educators and civic leaders in local government centers and state capitals; tens of thousands of students, teachers, and other members of the community take part each year

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Close Up on C-SPAN *featuring* Close Up at the Newseum—cable television public affairs programs featuring national leaders, journalists, and policy experts discussing current issues with Close Up participants; conducted at the Newseum, the world's first interactive museum of news.

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INTRODUCTION

Social studies teachers have long recognized the benefits of incorporating current issues instruction into their classes. Many adults can remember the Thursday evenings they spent when they were students scanning the newspaper for a worthy article to take to Friday's current events discussion. Their teachers knew that discussions about current events motivated students, encouraged their involvement, and provided them with practical information about the world in which they lived. While these weekly exercises were usually informative and enjoyable, such a random approach can no longer adequately prepare students for the twenty-first century. As citizens in a democratic society that is part of an interdependent world network of nations, students need more than simple information about the faraway places and national topics that happen to make today's front page.

To effectively exercise their responsibilities as citizens—the most important political office in U.S. society—students need models for analyzing current issues. For example, they need to understand the dimensions of national security—how it can be measured, how it can be strengthened, and what its costs and benefits are. Without such a framework, students will be unable to decide what they think their government should do in certain critical situations. The study of current events should, therefore, teach students how to analyze important issues. Issues of social justice, national security, and economic interdependence will change yearly, but once students have acquired a model for analyzing such issues, they can apply that model forever.

Not only can current events instruction provide students with valuable analytical models, but it can also serve to develop critical-thinking skills. By defining problems, collecting and analyzing data, developing alternative solutions, selecting appropriate responses, working with their peers, defending a position, and persuading others, students can learn the skills and attitudes that will make them informed and effective citizens.

The United States and the world face issues that threaten their survival, and educators have a responsibility to prepare the next generation of citizens to think critically and to solve problems. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed by *Current Issues* can help you in this noble task.

WHAT IS *CURRENT ISSUES?*

Current Issues, a textbook published annually by the Close Up Foundation, examines twenty timely domestic and foreign policy issues. The *Current Issues* format provides students with an ideal framework for studying the complexities of the issues.

The introductory section of *Current Issues* titled "The Federal Government" gives students important facts about the present administration, the 106th Congress, and the Supreme Court. Following "The Federal Government" are the twenty issue chapters—ten under "Domestic Policy Issues" and ten under "Foreign Policy Issues." Each chapter introduces a subject and provides background, current issues, a pro/con debate of key policy questions, and an outlook for the future.

WHAT IS THE *CURRENT ISSUES TEACHER'S GUIDE*?

The *Current Issues Teacher's Guide* provides a variety of instructional activities to help you and your students make the best use of *Current Issues.* The *Teacher's Guide* includes lesson plans for the introductory section and for the individual chapters in the book. Each set of lessons is designed to help students investigate and analyze intelligently the most pressing issues currently facing the United States and the world. Although the lessons are comprehensive, they also offer illustrative suggestions of how you might teach each unit. The lesson plans may be used exactly as written, or may be modified and adapted as your professional judgment suggests is appropriate.

The lesson plans in this guide use instructional strategies that help students develop a variety of citizenship skills. Each lesson includes student objectives, a list of terms and concepts, and several learning activities. The first activity—a motivational exercise introducing students to the issue and helping them recognize the personal significance of it—is followed by a series of in-depth learning activities that increase student understanding of the issue. Each lesson also includes enrichment activities that can be used to offer extra credit assignments for students who want to spend more time investigating a topic or to expand the study of selected issues.

The guide also contains unit test materials that you can easily reproduce. The test materials for each unit include ten objective true-false items, focusing on lower-level recall of basic information, and eight to ten subjective items that require students to use higher-level cognitive skills. An answer key for unit tests is included. The last section in the guide contains student handouts to be used along with many of the lessons.

FEATURES OF THE LESSON PLANS

Each lesson plan has several features to help you present the topic.

Terms and Concepts

Students need to understand the specialized terms that are associated with each topic in *Current Issues.* The most effective way to teach such terms is in the context of the chapter. Relate new terms to those that students already know. Help them break down a word into its component parts so that it is easier to understand.

You can ask students to define the terms and concepts at the start of the lesson, as is traditional, or you may consider these alternatives.

- Have students individually list unfamiliar terms as they read the chapter, and then decide which key words are essential for an understanding of the issue.
- Have students create a glossary of specialized terms on three- by five-inch index cards or in a notebook while they are reading each chapter.
- Give extra credit for every example of a listed term or concept that students find in books, newspapers, and magazines, or every time they use a term correctly in class discussion.
- Ask students to develop crossword puzzles using all or most of the terms and concepts.

Decisionmaking/Problem-Solving Activities

Any thoughtful analysis of current domestic or international issues inherently involves making decisions and solving problems. A variety of models are available for leading students through this process. The steps in the model presented here can be written on poster paper and displayed at the front of the room. Then, throughout the course, whenever students are discussing a decision or addressing a problem, refer them to the model. Show students how they can apply the steps in most situations to find the best solution.

Using Current Resources

While *Current Issues* provides an overview of national and international issues, the nature of such issues means that specific events and information about those events change daily. Therefore, many activities in the guide call upon your students to use outside sources of information. Newspapers, magazines, radio, and television should all be among the resources used by students studying *Current Issues.*

Examining the Proper Role of Government

As long as governments have existed, philosophers, political scientists, and citizens have debated what the proper role of government should be. Most political decisions reflect the beliefs of decisionmakers about the proper role of government; political controversy is often rooted in different answers to this question.

This question is inherent in each issue in *Current Issues.* The *Teacher's Guide* lesson plans examine the role of government in the issues.

Encourage students to consider this basic political question at the beginning of the course and to decide what they think the proper role of government should be. Then, have them reevaluate their positions after studying each issue. Is their decision about a proper course of governmental action on one issue consistent with their belief about the role of government in general? If not, why not? Should their general philosophy be modified? By the end of the course, students should have a well-articulated position about the proper role of government, be able to support that position, and apply it consistently to a wide variety of domestic and international issues.

Decisionmaking/Problem-Solving Model

1. Identify situations where a decision is required or a problem must be defined.
2. Identify likely sources of information about the issue(s).
3. Collect relevant information.
4. Classify, interpret, analyze, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate the information.
5. Recognize values related to the decision.
6. Prioritize values.
7. Identify alternative courses of action.
8. Predict the likely consequences of each alternative.
9. Make a decision based on the data you have and your most desired outcome.
10. Act to implement your decision.
11. Assess the results of implementing your decision.
12. Recognize the need to change your decision when warranted by new information.
13. Recognize gaps in information and areas needing further study.

How to Teach Controversial Issues

Controversy is an inherent part of any discussion of current issues. Although some teachers and students are afraid of controversy and see it as something to be avoided, controversy is natural and can lead to a productive classroom experience if handled properly.

Controversy motivates students and generates interest. When teaching controversial subjects, you should be responsive to some of the characteristics unique to working with such material. Use the following guidelines to help you.

1. When dealing with controversial subjects, keep an open mind so that you can encourage your class to examine an array of ideas and develop the best one. You may wish to establish the following ground rules.
    - Give everyone who has something to say an opportunity to say it.
    - Focus discussions on ideas, not on personalities or people.
    - Remember that just because you choose one position at the start does not mean you have to stay with it. Anyone can change a position at any time.
    - Attempt to reach an understanding, not to win.
    - Define all terms.
    - Avoid unsupported, emotional statements.
    - Cite sources of information.
    - Do not interrupt others.
    - Listen to and respect the opinions of others.

2. When controversy appears, identify areas of agreement and disagreement and clearly describe the source of controversy. Recognize that consensus is probably not possible or desirable.
3. Respect the right of students not to express their opinion on some issues. Sometimes an issue can be so personal that students do not want to share their thoughts or feelings.
4. Students should recognize that disagreements are simply that. They do not mean that friendships must end or that someone is "stupid" or "wrong." One device for maintaining class harmony might be to follow substantive discussions with an analysis of how well people listen, what made the discussion good or poor, and what the class might do to improve discussions.
5. Be certain that all sides of an issue have been fairly and equally presented. Biased sources present an opportunity to develop students' skills in detecting bias. If representatives of one side of an issue are invited to class, the other side should be represented too. Play devil's advocate to have students carefully examine all sides of an issue. Urge students to closely evaluate all positions before choosing one.
6. If you express your opinion on an issue, do so at the end of the unit and clearly indicate that it is your opinion only. Be certain to explain why you hold a particular view and tell students that you do not want them to change their views because of your personal beliefs.
7. Be aware of local standards. Issues that may be discussed freely in one community or school may not be suitable for discussion in another. If there are groups in your community that might take exception to discussion of certain issues, you and your school's administration should decide how to approach those issues.

HOW TO USE *CURRENT ISSUES*

Each of the parts of a *Current Issues* chapter offers unique opportunities for teaching. Consider using the following techniques to help you explore more fully the educational possibilities of each part.

Introduction

1. Ask students to identify policy questions raised in the introduction.
2. Share your own information and knowledge about the issue.
3. Urge students to talk to their parents about the issue.
4. Encourage students to read and to watch newspaper and television coverage of the issue.

5. Ask students:
    - What makes this topic a current issue?
    - What tone does the introduction set for the chapter?
    - How does this issue relate to others you have studied?
    - Why should a young person like you be interested in this issue?

Key Questions

1. Have students speculate on what they think are the key questions related to the issue before they read the "Key Questions" section.
2. Let students vote—either with a show of hands or on paper—their opinions on each key question. Share totals with the class. Repeat the vote again after students have read the chapter to see if opinions have changed.
3. Encourage students to focus their reading by keeping the key questions in mind throughout.
4. Use the key questions as items for surveys or questionnaires that students conduct with their peers or family members.

Background

1. Discuss the effect of the past on the present and the importance of historical precedent.
2. Alert students to pay attention to unfamiliar terms and concepts as they are presented.
3. Ask students to predict what current issues will be presented, based on the background reading.
4. Relate major historical events in the background section to issues studied in other chapters and to material covered in other social studies courses.

Current Issues

1. Ask students to explain the most important aspect of this issue. Why is the issue included in *Current Issues* this year? Suggest that students read other sources to see if anything new has happened since the book was published.
2. Relate the issue to newspaper, magazine, and television coverage that students may be following.
3. Encourage students to share their views on the issues with friends, family, or government representatives.
4. Demonstrate the complexity of issues in class discussion by pointing out how issues overlap (e.g., crime and constitutional rights, immigration and education) and how U.S. issues affect others around the world (e.g., the U.S. economy and East Asia, crime and drugs and Latin America).

5. Ask students to select one aspect of the issue that is of special interest to them and explain that aspect to the rest of the class.

Outlook

1. Ask students to characterize the "Outlook" section as positive, negative, or ambivalent. How do they personally feel about the outlook for the issue?
2. Relate the forecast in the "Outlook" section to the "Background" and "Current Issues" sections. Have students consider whether or not the chapter's look into the future was predictable.
3. Allow students to brainstorm ways they could effect change so that the projection in the "Outlook" section would be more to their liking.
4. Have students rewrite the "Outlook" section to make it agree with their views.

The Debate

1. Urge students to take a stand on each debate question. Have their views changed since the beginning of the unit? If so, have them explore why.
2. Help students analyze the arguments given for each side of the question. Is one side stronger than the other, or are the differences merely a matter of opinion?
3. Ask students to speculate on which side of the debate questions most people in their age group would stand. Then, ask them on which side they think most Americans would stand.
4. Have students find out their representative's and senators' views on the questions.
5. Ask students to label the views presented in the debate as liberal, conservative, or neither. Why did students label the issues as they did?
6. Discuss the interrelatedness of the issues. Is there any middle ground between the pro and the con arguments presented?

Charts, Graphs, Maps, Photos, and Cartoons

1. As students study the charts and graphs in *Current Issues,* remind them to do the following:
   - Determine the kind of illustration it is—bar graph, frequency curve, pictograph, or merely a list of data.
   - Note the title, because it is the key to understanding the chart or graph.
   - Pay attention to what both axes in a graph represent and to the scale being used.
   - Check the legend or key. What do all the shadings and symbols represent?
   - Find any trends or contrasts evident in the illustration.
   - Speculate on why the illustration was included.

2. By relating the maps used in *Current Issues* to the skills developed in social studies classes, you can help your students interpret these maps. The following reminders may also help.
   - Find the illustrated area on the globe to locate its position in the world. Find the scale of the map.
   - Check the map's key and legend.
   - Look at more detailed or larger maps of the same area if you want to find further information.
   - Notice the surrounding areas, and think about how geography affects the character of a nation or region.
   - How does the map help you understand the issue?
3. The photos and cartoons in *Current Issues* were all selected to clarify the issues. Remind students of the following:
   - Read the caption to learn more about the photo or cartoon and the issue at hand.
   - Speculate on why the photo or cartoon was included in the chapter.
   - Speculate on what message the photo or cartoon is trying to convey.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

A variety of additional teaching activities and devices are offered here to enhance your current issues course. These activities should complement the previous suggestions and tie together all portions of the units for your students.

You may wish to incorporate the following activities into the *Current Issues* units.

1. Maintain a current issues bulletin board in your classroom. Students should bring in newspaper and magazine articles relating to the issue under study and post them on the board.
2. Discuss general questions with the class, such as:
   - What makes an issue or part of the world important or critical?
   - What issues or regions were critical when your parents or grandparents were teenagers?
   - What issues or regions do you think will be important when your children or grandchildren are in high school?
3. Have students enter their thoughts and feelings about each lesson in a journal. The journal will allow students to express candidly their reactions to the issues they have just studied, and should be particularly valuable for students who have difficulty sharing their views in class. If students are willing to hand in their journals periodically, you may gain valuable information about their reactions to the lessons. Or students may wish to write reactions to a book or article

they have read, a class activity, a recent headline, or comments from the class. If students wish, allow them to share their journal entries with the class.

Follow-up Activities

After you have completed your study of *Current Issues,* you may wish to use one or more of these follow-up activities to give students some feeling of closure. These activities will help students synthesize and evaluate the information they have learned and reinforce the interrelatedness of the issues.

1. Provide students with a list of all the issues you have studied and have them rank the issues. Students could rank the issues according to what they have learned, their personal preferences, and the issues' importance for study and discussion at this time. Then ask them to circle four or five issues that they consider to be most crucial to our times, and to justify their choices in a brief essay.

2. To demonstrate the interrelatedness of the issues they have studied, ask students to write an essay explaining (1) how the issues affect one another and (2) how the issues affect global relations. Students should incorporate as many issues as possible.

3. If students have kept journals, have them analyze their journals at the end of the course. Which issues have had the most profound effect on them? Why? Can they find any pattern to their reactions? Are their responses mostly positive, negative, or a mixture? Why do they think this is so? What would an outside reader think about their positions?

4. Try a sentence completion activity, either orally or in writing. Some suggestions for open-ended sentences include the following:
   - I wish we had studied more about ____________________.
   - I wish we had spent less time on ____________________.
   - My favorite learning activity was ____________________.
   - The most important lesson I have learned from this course is __________.
   - In my opinion, the most important issue of our time is ______________.

5. As a concluding activity, break the students into groups of four or five. Their task is to revise the federal budget based on what they have learned about the domestic and foreign policy issues covered in this book.

   Have students read the chapter in *Current Issues* titled "The Federal Budget." Students should then create their own budget by working together in groups and coming to agreement on the figures. Each group should be prepared to address the following questions.
   - What budget items did you cut? Why?
   - What budget items did you increase? Why?
   - Did you increase the entire budget? Why or why not?
   - What percentage of the entire budget is allotted to each category? Where is your greatest spending? Where is your least spending?
   - Did you add or delete any budget categories? Why?

Ask students what they learned from trying to balance spending needs and from getting their group to agree. Relate their experiences in developing a budget to those of Congress. What are the similarities and differences?

Duplicate each group's budget and distribute it to the class. Then, have each group present its budget. Encourage students to use visual aids such as a pie chart to clarify their budgets. Each group should be prepared to answer questions from the rest of the class. If time allows, you might ask the class to arrive at a consensus budget. This might best be accomplished by choosing a committee made up of one member from each group.

Note: To help students learn more about the budget process, you might want to obtain Close Up Publishing's budget role-play game, *Slicing the Pie.*

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The *Current Issues Teacher's Guide* incorporates a wide range of activities. While you have undoubtedly developed a teaching style that works for you and your students and feels comfortable, educational research increasingly shows that the most successful teachers are those who can effectively apply a wide array of teaching strategies. The following section provides you with some general "tricks of the trade" and suggestions derived from experienced classroom instructors.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a technique for quickly generating a broad spectrum of ideas about a topic. Because no initial evaluation or discussion is allowed, brainstorming is a nonthreatening strategy that allows every student to participate regardless of academic ability. The topic for brainstorming should be clearly stated, allow for a diversity of ideas, and require no extensive prior knowledge for a student to become involved. Responses should be posted as students call them out, and no discussion should be permitted because it may inhibit creative but risky ideas. You may want to write the following brainstorming rules on the board before you start.

- Say anything that comes to mind.
- You can piggyback on the ideas of others.
- Do not evaluate or criticize what others say.
- When you cannot think of anything else, wait a minute and try again.

SCAMPER TECHNIQUE

S-substitute, subtract
C-combine
A-adapt, add
M-modify, minify, magnify
P-put to other uses, piggyback
E-eliminate
R-reverse, rearrange

Another strategy for encouraging creativity is to apply the SCAMPER technique to each of the ideas suggested during brainstorming. SCAMPER allows the teacher to stimulate responses and organize them properly.

Conclude a brainstorming session by focusing students' attention on the purpose for conducting the activity.

Debate

A debate can be an effective means of presenting most positions on current issues. It may be difficult to involve all students in a single debate, so nonteam members should serve as judges, moderators, or timekeepers to maintain interest. Holding several debates will allow most or all students to be on a debate team. The following debate procedures may be helpful when conducting a debate.

1. Select a topic—possibly one suggested by the class.
2. State the topic so that it has clear pro and con sides. For example: Federal funding for the homeless should be increased.
3. Select pro and con debaters and allow them time to research and prepare.
4. Select a timekeeper and a moderator.
5. Seat the debaters in front of the class with the moderator in the middle; position the side favoring the statement to the right of the moderator and the opponents to the left.
6. Begin the debate by having the moderator read the debate statement and introduce the first speaker supporting the statement. Speakers may talk only for a predetermined length of time.
7. The first opposition speaker then presents his or her arguments for the same amount of time. This format of alternating pro and con speakers continues until all speakers have presented initial arguments.
8. Rebuttal arguments are made for the specified amount of time, beginning with the group opposed to the statement.
9. Conclude the debate by polling the class. Discuss any changes of position in the audience. What were the most persuasive arguments presented by both sides?

Panel Discussion

A panel discussion is an effective means of researching and discussing a topic while allowing a sizable number of students to participate. The following guidelines may help you conduct a panel discussion.

1. The moderator introduces the topic and panelists.
2. Panelists present their views for a specified amount of time until all have spoken.
3. Panelists are given an opportunity to question other panelists and to discuss the issue.
4. The moderator closes the discussion with a summary of panel presentations.
5. The moderator calls for a forum period during which the class may question panelists.
6. Conclude the panel discussion by polling the class. Discuss any changes of position in the audience. What were the most persuasive arguments presented?

Classroom Use of Resource Persons

Local communities often offer a vast untapped resource. The Close Up Foundation has been a pioneer in using experts in the community to educate youth. Close Up staff believe that community members have much to offer students and should be included in school instruction as often as possible.

Teachers have often invited local citizens into their classes as guest lecturers. One of the most effective uses of resource persons is to provide students with a problem or issue similar to one that the resource person must face in his or her work.

Ask students what they would do in dealing with the problem or issue. Then have the resource person critique students' responses. This strategy has the benefit of limiting preparation time for the resource person because he or she simply has to apply professional knowledge in responding to students' problem-solving strategies or perspectives. In addition, such a tactic generates student interest because the resource person is bringing his or her expertise to bear on students' own ideas. This technique usually generates healthy discussion and a large number of questions.

Teachers and resource persons should always work together closely to plan the classroom visit. The following tips can help you prepare a resource person for a successful visit to your class.

1. Prepare the resource person. Tell him or her about the characteristics of your students, what they have been studying, and what to expect from them. Suggest topics you would like to have the person cover and find out what he or she requires for the presentation.
2. Prepare students adequately. Give necessary assignments far enough in advance so that students can complete them. Discuss the background of the resource person and explain procedures for the visit.
3. Have one or two students meet your guest and direct him or her to the classroom.
4. Have students prepare name tags or desk nameplates to help the resource person identify students.
5. Assist the resource person in classroom management if necessary. Do not leave the room.
6. Begin classroom activities immediately.
7. If necessary, help your visitor end the presentation and depart gracefully.
8. Provide the resource person with feedback about the presentation and write a note of appreciation.
9. Have alternatives planned just in case the resource person does not arrive. These alternatives should be educationally sound and fit in the context of the current unit of instruction.
10. You might want to give the resource persons the following do's and don'ts ahead of time to make them feel more comfortable.

Do

- consider the age and experience of the audience
- prepare adequately
- maintain eye contact
- solicit feedback frequently
- encourage active participation early on and throughout the presentation
- be yourself; let your personality show; be natural; smile; relax
- call on and interact with a variety of students
- circulate around the room
- involve the teacher
- make sure everyone hears all questions and answers
- know the objectives of your visit and how the visit relates to what students have been studying

Don't

- lecture at students
- use jargon or unfamiliar words
- act condescendingly
- become angry at heckling or passive responses
- react defensively to criticism
- read a prepared speech
- talk in a monotone
- assume that students either have or lack knowledge about a given point (Find out what they know.)

Role-Plays and Simulations

One of the most effective instructional techniques, when used correctly, is role-play or simulation. This technique enables students to experience a situation from the perspective of persons actually involved in a similar situation. Role-plays and simulations are an effective means of transmitting knowledge, and they have a powerful effect on attitudes as well. Finally, role-plays and simulations are excellent ways of allowing students to examine a situation from all perspectives and practice critical thinking.

The following guidelines will help you conduct role-plays and simulations.

1. Present the problem, situation, or task clearly and make sure students understand what they are expected to do.
2. Involve everyone. If there are not enough roles for all students, create new ones or conduct several versions of the simulation at the same time.
3. Involve all students as quickly as possible.
4. Begin with simple activities. Students without experience in role-plays and simulations may require time to develop the skills necessary to do them well.

5. Consider having students reverse roles. Assign students to represent views that they do not advocate personally.

6. Help students identify appropriate sources of information that will inform them of the perspective of the group or person they represent. Allow students enough time to locate and analyze information and prepare their roles. Use this preparation time to talk with groups and individuals to gauge the degree to which they understand their roles.

7. Create an accepting environment where students can make mistakes, take risks, and be creative while being responsible. Do not expect polished performances immediately.

8. Conclude with a thorough discussion. Highlight the instructional objectives you had for the activity. What did you want students to gain from the activity? Relate the role-plays or simulations to what students have been and will be studying. Explore how students felt and what their feelings suggest about the people who experience the situation in real life. Did students feel that the roles they played were accurate representations of the real people? What did they learn from the experience?

Do not be discouraged if the role-play or simulation does not work well the first few times you use it. This technique can be difficult to use initially but pays handsome dividends once mastered.

Small-Group Cooperative Learning

Many teachers have been doing small-group work for years. Recent research suggests ways in which teachers can conduct small-group activities more effectively than by simply putting students into groups and assigning them a task.

The following guidelines will help you use cooperative small-group work.

1. Small-group activities can create opportunities for loss of control; therefore, such activities require class members to follow rules. Sample rules might include the following:
    - Move quickly and quietly to groups and remain there.
    - Talking between groups is prohibited.
    - Talking within groups must be done quietly.
    - All groups must have leaders whose task is to keep the group working, make sure that everyone participates, and keep discussions focused on the issues.

2. Organize groups heterogeneously and design group tasks in such a way that every student becomes involved.

3. Encourage students to help each other without actually doing the work of another group member. One way to encourage cooperation is to award grades based on individual work and grades based on the performance of the group. Design tasks so that each individual student can be assisted by his or her peers but cannot have the peers do the work of the individual.

4. Help students develop the skills necessary to work well in small groups. You might review the content objectives of each activity and discuss the following questions.
   - What helped this group work well together?
   - What interfered with this group's working well together?
   - What could members do next time to help improve this group's work?
   - Did everyone participate? Why or why not?
5. Keep group size small; three to five students is optimal.
6. Give clear directions and allow adequate time for students to complete the task.
7. Monitor group activities to spot areas of difficulty.
8. Use small groups only for cooperative tasks, not for independent work while merely sitting with others.

Developing Research Skills

An essential part of every student's education is to learn how to research an issue, adopt a position, and argue persuasively for that position. Many students have few skills in these areas. If students are to obtain the information that they need to act as informed public policy shapers, they need your help in developing these essential skills. The following list of skills provides a handy sequential organizer whereby teachers can guide students through the research process.

1. Recognize that research should be aimed at gaining understanding and a complete view of an issue, not simply at gathering information to argue a predetermined point.
2. Learn how to limit a subject based on time and resources available.
3. Identify sources of appropriate information.
4. Use indexes, tables of contents, and other aids to locate pertinent information quickly.
5. Understand information in written, pictorial, graphic, cartographic, mathematical, and other formats.
6. Evaluate sources for information bias, accuracy, pertinence, and authority.
7. Take notes.
8. Organize information.
9. Analyze information and draw inferences.
10. Synthesize information and develop arguments.
11. Organize ideas.
12. Support ideas.
13. Articulate or write ideas in an organized and readable manner.
14. Document sources.

The Close Up staff hopes that the information presented in this introduction will make your task of teaching *Current Issues* easier and enrich the quality of instruction for your students. Each section of the introduction is designed to make *Current Issues* a more usable resource for your classroom and the comprehensive and motivational textbook you need to teach current issues effectively.

The lesson plans that follow offer specific teaching activities, test materials, and handouts for each chapter in *Current Issues.* The keys to using these lesson plans and each section of the *Current Issues* chapters have been presented in this introduction. These keys can open up new understanding and perspective for your students as they explore the current issues of our time.

LESSON PLANS

The Clinton Administration 23
The 106th Congress 23
The Supreme Court 23

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION
THE 106TH CONGRESS
THE SUPREME COURT

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. define government and discuss its value and purpose
2. identify key members of the Clinton administration and their chief responsibilities
3. discuss the issues taken up by the 105th and 106th Congresses
4. discuss the makeup and functions of the Supreme Court

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- associate justice
- Cabinet
- campaign finance reform
- chief justice
- conservative
- divided government
- impeachment
- independent counsel
- liberal
- political action committee (PAC)
- soft money
- term limits

ACTIVITIES

1. To introduce the unit, ask students to define government. Discuss why government is necessary. Divide the class into small groups of three or four students and ask them to consider and jot down answers to the questions below. (Encourage students to be specific and to cite examples whenever possible.)

- What services and rights should you expect from the government?
- What impact does the government have on your daily life?
- What impact can you have on the government and its policies?
- What would happen if the government suddenly ceased to exist?

After an appropriate period of time, have a spokesperson from each group give his or her group's responses to the questions. Do all groups agree? Point out that differences of opinion on questions such as these reflect similar differences in political parties, Congress, and society at large.

Finally, ask students what conclusions they can draw from this discussion. Point out that it is vital to be informed about all aspects of the operation of government and that becoming informed is one of the goals of studying *Current Issues.*

2. After students read "The Clinton Administration," have them consider the following questions.

- What qualifications are common for high-level officials in the executive branch?
- Why do you think certain persons were selected for certain positions? Were they all qualified? Have they had other federal jobs?
- What common personal characteristics or traits do many officials in the executive branch share?

Next, using a wide variety of current events sources, have students identify controversial or important issues being faced by officials listed in "The Clinton Administration." You might want to assign each official to one or two students to ensure that all are covered. Students should consider how decisions made by these officials influence the country, students' friends and neighbors, and the students themselves. Discuss the political ideology of several of these men and women, and encourage students to predict their actions during the next year.

3. Open the discussion by asking the class what "separation of powers" means. Explain that in the American political system, each branch of government is assigned a specific function: The legislative branch—Congress—makes laws; the executive branch—led by the president—enforces laws; and the judicial branch—federal courts and the Supreme Court—interprets laws. Review with the class the historical reasons for adopting this system. Ask what problems separation of powers can and does cause.

Next, have students read the "The 106th Congress" chapter, and then, with them working in pairs, allow students time to answer the questions on **Student Handout 1—Learning About Congress.** They can answer the first six questions from information in the chapter; they will have to use an outside resource to answer the last four questions. A local or state newspaper should provide the information.

After students have finished with the handout, lead a class discussion based on their answers. Conclude by asking students to use what they have read to speculate on the major issues Congress will likely take up in 1999 and 2000.

4. Begin the activity by asking students to imagine how society would operate if there were no courts to resolve differences of opinion. Discuss their responses. Then, point out some unique features of federal judges: (1) they are not elected, (2) they serve for life, and (3) they can only be removed from office through impeachment. Ask students to explain what the motives of the framers of the Constitution might have been for establishing such rules. (They wanted a judiciary free from political pressure and one that would base its decisions solely on the Constitution and the law rather than on what might be popular or politically expedient.)

Broaden the discussion by explaining that judges, like everyone else, have a broad range of opinions. The opinions they hold reveal whether they are liberal, conservative, or somewhere in between. Discuss with students how liberals and conservatives generally view the role of government in society. But also be sure to stress that attaching labels to political opinions can be misleading. Some Americans are liberal on social issues and conservative on economic issues. Others are just the opposite. In reality, most Americans consider themselves to be moderates in political ideology.

Focus the discussion by asking what difference it makes whether the Supreme Court has a liberal or a conservative majority. Students should read "The

Supreme Court" in *Current Issues* and, either in class discussion or in writing, answer the following questions.

- What is the main function of the Supreme Court?
- How does the Court shape American political and social life?
- How has the Burger-Rehnquist Court differed in its decisions from the Warren Court?
- What influence did President Reagan have on the Supreme Court?
- What influence did President Bush have on the Court?
- What influence has President Clinton had on the Court?
- What unusual duty did Chief Justice Rehnquist perform in 1999, and how did he get the job?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the federal government. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Encourage students to become and stay informed about current events by having them bring to class one article each week from a newspaper or magazine pertaining to a current issue. The article should be accompanied by a summary of its main points and the student's reaction to the issues it raises. By doing this, students will learn to appreciate that the U.S. political system is dynamic and flexible. Post the articles on a bulletin board under appropriate heads and spend a few minutes each day reviewing the new additions.

2. Have students research and write sketches of each Supreme Court justice. Urge them to pay particular attention to the justices' past records. Discuss each justice in class, and ask if justices ever change their political ideology once they are on the Supreme Court. Suggest some reasons why.

3. One often-forgotten member of the administration is the vice president. Have students research the office of the vice president to find out what the qualifications are, what famous men have held the position, and what the vice president's duties are. Then lead a class discussion on these findings. How are vice presidential candidates chosen? Why did Bill Clinton choose Al Gore to be his running mate? Was Gore qualified? What qualifications was Bob Dole looking for when he chose his running mate in 1996? Have there been vice presidential candidates whose qualifications were questioned? Did any of them go on to become president? You might mention the concerns many had about Harry Truman's qualifications, or the fact that President Dwight Eisenhower had serious doubts about Richard Nixon and that many advised Eisenhower to drop Nixon from the ticket in 1956.

LESSON PLANS

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THE FEDERAL BUDGET

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. define concepts relating to the federal budget and the national debt
2. recognize the difficulties in developing a budget
3. examine arguments presented by groups affected by congressional decisions

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- appropriation bill
- authorization bill
- budget deficit
- budget surplus
- "corporate welfare"
- discretionary spending
- fiscal year
- generational responsibility
- mandatory spending
- national debt
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- privatization
- reconciliation bill
- Universal Savings Accounts

ACTIVITIES

1. Write on the board $1,766,000,000,000. Explain that this figure represents the federal budget for fiscal year 2000. Students should read "The Federal Budget," paying close attention to the charts and graphs.

Then, divide the class into groups of not more than five and distribute **Student Handout 2—Ranking the Budget.** Give groups adequate time in class to complete the first part of the handout or allow them to do it as a homework project. Point out that the twenty categories listed are merely representative of the hundreds of existing programs. When everyone is ready, have a representative from each group read its list. Compare the results. Can the entire class reach a consensus on the nation's budget priorities? Next, have the groups meet again to discuss the second part of **Student Handout 2,** which asks them to describe the economic, social, and political implications of their budget as it reflects their priorities.

Refer students to the chart on page 40 of *Current Issues,* which shows how federal money is spent. In the subsequent discussion, try to address the following issues.

- The national debt poses serious problems for all Americans.
- Reducing federal expenditures is difficult, especially given the likely public response to cuts in popular areas.
- Increasing taxes may be necessary to keep the budget balanced.
- Congress and the president must cooperate during the budget process.
- The ideological positions held by leaders in the executive and legislative branches exert a powerful influence on the budget process.
- Balancing the federal budget is not easy.

2. Divide your class into four groups of equal size and assign each group to represent one of the following:

- a Wall Street stock market investment firm
- members of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
- recent college graduates
- elected members of Congress serving on the Save Social Security Commission

The members of Congress on the Save Social Security Commission are looking for ways to reform Social Security so that it does not run out of money early in the next century. The commission is considering the following proposals:

(1) raising the retirement age from 65 to 67

(2) removing the cap of $68,400 on which American workers now pay the 6.2 percent payroll tax

(3) privatizing Social Security so that some of the money Americans now contribute would be invested in stocks or bonds

(4) using some of the budget surplus to add more money to the Social Security trust fund

The groups representing the Wall Street firm, the members of AARP, and the recent college graduates should prepare arguments stating their positions for or against these proposals and pick one representative to argue their group's case in front of the Save Social Security Commission. Each group should try to decide how these proposals would affect its interests. Meanwhile, the members of the commission should be prepared to ask each group questions after its spokesperson has presented his or her argument. After groups have testified, poll the entire class on which plan they believe would be best for saving Social Security.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the federal budget. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Organize classroom debates on the following statements.

- Congress should use the budget surplus to reduce the national debt.
- "Corporate welfare" should be eliminated.
- Social Security should be privatized.

Allow debaters adequate time to research their topics. Before beginning debates, select a timekeeper and a moderator to keep the debates orderly and to keep them moving. You may also want to select a panel of judges or simply poll the entire class at the end of each debate to determine a "winner." The affirmative, or pro side, should go first for a set length of time followed by the negative, or con side, for the same length of time. Then allow each side two minutes for rebuttal. After a winner has been determined, briefly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments.

2. Ask members of your class to write letters to their representative or senators about the national debt, social security, or some other aspect of the federal budget. They should carefully study a part of the budget or a tax in which they are interested or that may affect them and their families, and then express their views in a thoughtful letter. Discuss with them the most effective way to express a view in a letter and suggest they invite their members of Congress to respond. They can address letters to:

(Senator's name)
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

or

(Representative's name)
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment
2. recognize the role of the Supreme Court in interpreting constitutional issues
3. investigate arguments on both sides of a controversial issue
4. compare student and adult attitudes toward free speech on the Internet

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- assisted suicide
- Bill of Rights
- Communications Decency Act
- electronic privacy
- federalism
- Fourteenth Amendment
- Religious Freedom Restoration Act
- undue burden
- unenumerated rights

ACTIVITIES

1. Introduce the unit by familiarizing students with the Bill of Rights. Have students complete **Student Handout 3—Constitutional Amendments** using information provided in *Current Issues* and a copy of the Bill of Rights.

Review the handout in class to ensure that students are familiar with the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and the Supreme Court decisions that have affected those rights. Then, use the following questions to lead a discussion about rights guaranteed in the Constitution.

- What does constitutional government mean? What are some characteristics of constitutional government?
- The First Amendment says "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech. . . ." What does this imply? Does the First Amendment grant rights to Americans, or does it protect them from government infringement on their rights?
- Why did some framers of the Constitution believe the rights of citizens had to be protected from the government?
- Do you think the framers meant to absolutely bar any restrictions of speech and press? What kinds of expression do you think may not be protected by the Constitution?
- What procedural rights does an accused person have?
- What does "due process" mean? Who should decide what is fair, the legislature or the courts?

Urge students to read the Bill of Rights and jot down any questions they would like to ask during the study of this unit.

2. Divide your class into five groups (if you have more than thirty students, use ten groups) and assign one of the following topics to each group:

- abortion
- doctor-assisted suicide
- free exercise of religion
- gun control
- electronic privacy

Then, distribute **Student Handout 4—Topic Research** and give students sufficient time to complete the handout. Groups should answer the questions on their handouts as they apply to the topics they were assigned. Remind the students that they will be responsible for reporting back to the entire class. After they have finished with the handout, have each group report its findings to the class and allow the rest of the students to question group members. As the teacher, you may want to play devil's advocate by pressing groups to explain their reasoning. Encourage their classmates to pose tough questions to the presenters.

3. Divide the class into two groups of equal size. Label them A and B. Then, tell students that individually they are going to poll a small number of people either in or out of school to find out opinions about free speech on the Internet.

Both groups will ask the following question of the people its members poll.

- Should information transmitted over the Internet be censored?

Each member of group A will ask this question of three high school students. Group B will ask this same question of three adults in the community. Group members should not poll an individual that someone else has previously polled.

Set a time limit for completion of the poll. Then, get the groups together to tabulate results. They should determine the number of respondents who said "no" and the number who said "yes." When both groups have finished, post the results on the board and lead a discussion based on the outcome. What do the results show about community attitudes on this matter? Do students have significantly different opinions than adults? What comments did respondents make after they answered the question?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on constitutional rights. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. The role of the Supreme Court in interpreting the Bill of Rights is vitally important. Have students research key cases in which the Court has addressed constitutional rights. Listed below are some suggestions for research.

Cases dealing with freedom of belief:
- *School District of Abington v. Schempp* (1963)
- *Welsh v. United States* (1970)
- *Wallace v. Jaffree* (1985)

Cases dealing with freedom of expression:
- *New York Times v. United States* (1971)
- *Miller v. California* (1973)
- *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988)
- *Texas v. Johnson* (1989)

Cases dealing with rights of the accused:
- *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)
- *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966)
- *In re Gault* (1967)
- *United States v. Garrison* (1984)
- *Maryland v. Garrison* (1987)
- *United States v. Salerno* (1987)

2. One way of teaching students to appreciate the freedoms enjoyed by Americans is to have them compare civil liberties in the United States with civil liberties in other countries. Assign various countries to interested students and have them report back to the class. It may be interesting for them to report on rights in nations such as Canada, China, Cuba, Iran, and Russia.

CRIME AND DRUGS

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. separate fact and opinion about crime and drugs in the United States
2. survey community attitudes about crime and drugs

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Brady gun control law
- drug trafficking
- gun control
- mandatory sentencing
- Megan's law
- Second Amendment
- "broken windows" policy
- Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by telling students that you are going to read several statements relating to the issues of crime and illegal drug use in the United States and that after each statement is read they are going to move to one side of the room or the other, depending on whether they think the statement is fact or opinion. Students who think the statement is a fact should line up on the left side of the room; students who think the statement is an opinion should line up on the right side. Begin with the first statement on the following list.

- About 1.7 million violent crimes are committed in the United States every year. (fact)
- The illegal drug trade encourages violence and crime in U.S. cities. (opinion)
- The roots of crime are unemployment and poverty. (opinion)
- Of every 1,000 people arrested for violent crimes, only 350 are ever sent to prison. (fact)
- The drug problem would lessen if the government spent more money fighting the demand for drugs rather than the supply. (opinion)
- The only way violent crime in the United States can be curbed is by limiting or banning handgun possession. (opinion)
- The majority of Americans polled on the matter believe that the government should fight crime by getting tougher on criminals. (fact)
- Drug abuse is a problem only for young, low-income, and minority Americans. (opinion)
- A high percentage of people in prison are guilty of drug-related crimes. (fact)
- In 1997, the homicide rate dropped to a thirty-year low. (fact)
- Most federal crime legislation passed during the 1980s and 1990s emphasizes enforcement and punishment over crime prevention. (fact)

After students react to each statement and both sides have stabilized, ask several students from each side to explain their position. Allow students to interact and ask questions of each other, but remind them that this is a discussion and an opportunity for you to determine what previous knowledge they have about the topic.

When all statements have been read, discuss how they can tell if a statement is a fact or an opinion. (Facts are based on supportive numbers, statistics, or documented evidence; opinions are based on a belief, an interpretation, or an impression.)

Conclude by reading each statement again and asking students to identify the specific information or words that distinguish it as fact or opinion.

2. After students have read "Crime and Drugs," tell them that they are going to find out how members of their community feel about crime. Distribute copies of **Student Handout 5—Community Crime Survey** to each member of the class. Then, have each student survey five people who live in their community. They should mark all five respondents' answers on one copy of the handout.

After students have completed the survey, bring them back together and tally the results on the board. Do the results of the survey show any clear attitudes about crime or drugs in your community? Discuss each item and why students think people responded as they did. Pay particular attention to items on which respondents were clearly divided. Ask class members if they think the gender, income, education, or religion of respondents had any bearing on the outcome.

You might want to follow up this activity by asking the school or community newspapers to publish the results. Perhaps your students could write letters to the editor to accompany the results of the survey.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on crime and drugs. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students research crime statistics in your city and/or state. They should go to local police departments or read court records to find out the number of arrests and convictions for violent crimes for the previous year or two. They should also attempt to find out how many of those arrests and convictions were drug related. Ask them to compare the most recent statistics with earlier years and conclude whether or not violent crime is rising or falling.

2. Invite speakers to class to talk to your students about gun control. Ask a representative from each side of the issue to state why he or she is for or against stiffer gun control laws. Likely speakers would come from groups such as the National Rifle Association; Handgun Control, Inc.; police departments; shooting clubs; and other organizations that have taken a stand on the issue. It may also be interesting to invite a constitutional lawyer to address the issue from the perspective of the Second Amendment. To help your students better understand the issue of gun control, you may want to obtain from Close Up Publishing a copy of the videotape *To Keep and Bear Arms: Gun Control and the Second Amendment,* 2nd ed.

3. Divide the class into two groups. Then, have each student in one group write one paragraph favoring and one paragraph opposing the following statement:

- The federal government should fight drugs by attacking the supply of drugs coming into the United States rather than trying to reduce the demand.

Students in the second group should write similar paragraphs about the following:

- Convicted criminals serving sentences should be required to submit DNA samples for criminal investigations other than those for which they were convicted.

When class members have finished writing their paragraphs, ask students from both groups to read their pro and con arguments. Discuss both sides of the issues with the class. Conclude by asking for a show of hands to find out how your students feel about the issues.

THE ECONOMY

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. recognize the interdependence of economic issues
2. trace and analyze the performance of the stock market

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- antitrust laws
- Federal Reserve Board
- flat tax
- Group of Eight (G-8)
- income gap
- inflation
- international interdependence
- minimum wage
- national sales tax
- productivity
- recession
- supply-side economics
- unemployment

ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by pointing out to students that many relationships among the economic concepts described in "The Economy" may not always be readily apparent to them. Then, distribute **Student Handout 6—Cause/Effect Relationships.** Divide the class into groups of three or four and ask each group to analyze each pair of terms listed on the handout. They should try to determine how the two terms in each pair relate to each other. When groups have finished, have the whole class analyze the items on the handout. Use the discussion guide below to help you lead the class discussion. Encourage students to offer any additional relationships they may have noted along the way.

Discussion Guide for Student Handout 6

1. If other countries produce more, they can spread their costs among more products, thereby reducing the sale price of individual items.
2. Asians buy fewer American products when their economy is in recession. Therefore, American companies may close down or reduce their workforce.
3. When the government overspends, it has to borrow money to pay its bills. This means that both the government and consumers are asking banks for loans. When demand goes up, prices generally follow. Interest rates work the same way: When demand for money is high, interest rates go up.
4. If businesses have to pay more to borrow money, they will be reluctant to expand. They will, therefore, be less likely to hire new workers.
5. If the value of money goes down (inflation), people have little incentive to save. Therefore, banks have less money to loan to consumers or businesses.
6. If taxes are reduced, businesses can keep more of their profits to use for expansion. Thus, they will likely hire more workers.
7. When people are laid off, they can collect unemployment compensation. When unemployment rises, the government has to pay more for unemployment compensation, causing the deficit to worsen. Plus, unemployed people pay less in taxes; this also adds to the deficit.
8. A company that has a monopoly on an item many people use can charge higher prices because they have little or no competition. This drives up the cost to consumers of that item or any other product that needs that item to operate.

2. Discuss with your class the dramatic upward performance of the stock market throughout the 1990s. Point out that stocks have increased in value faster than other investments. Then, organize an investment activity in which each student will track the performance of one company on the New York Stock Exchange. Each student will simply draw a company out of a hat and watch and record its daily performance on a wall chart. You will choose the companies to go in the hat. Select a variety—electronics, automotives, heavy industry, Internet, agriculture, banking, and so forth. You—or someone in the class—should make a chart to pin on a bulletin board listing all the companies and leaving spaces for students to write in daily prices. Select a specific length of time for the activity to continue and make sure your chart has a space for all necessary days.

Urge class members to look for news stories about their company as the activity proceeds. Then, at the end of the observation period, the class should decide which stocks did best and which did worst. Look for patterns. Did all electronic stocks do well? Or did they all do poorly? Perhaps one Internet stock skyrocketed and another fell flat. Discuss why that may have happened. Ask students if they would now like to invest their own money in the stock market. Ask them what they think of plans that some elected officials have to invest a certain amount of Social Security taxes in the stock market. Is it too risky or would it be a good idea?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the economy. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students create a visual expression of a position they support from the "Debate" section of the chapter. Their visual could be in the form of a diagram, a set of political cartoons, a collage, or any other medium they wish to use. Tell them that they should illustrate their positions effectively enough so that others in the class can know exactly what their positions are by viewing the illustration. Once the visuals are finished, display together all those that represent the same topic. In a class discussion, have students analyze the illustrations. Which are the most powerful? Which would the current administration most support? Which would be most supported by the party out of power?

2. Organize debates on the key questions in "The Economy."

- Should the government raise the minimum wage?
- Should the government abandon the current tax system?
- Should the government reform its antitrust laws?

Refer to the section on page 15 under "Instructional Strategies" to get tips on organizing and conducting your debates.

EDUCATION

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify problems and reform efforts in U.S. public schools
2. debate issues of bilingual education, school choice, and teacher training

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- bilingual education
- busing
- charter schools
- desegregation
- Great Society
- Head Start
- magnet schools
- Proposition 227
- school choice
- vouchers

ACTIVITIES

1. After students have read "Education" in *Current Issues,* ask them to list the problems identified in the chapter. Then, in a class discussion, have them identify reforms that some districts and schools have made in response to the problems.

Once students understand the basic problems in education today and the types of reforms that are being implemented in school districts around the nation, have them do research on how the problems and reforms apply to your school district.

First, divide the class into groups of four or five. Then, tell students that they are going to present a mock television report called "Channel 99 Roving Reporter—Focus on Our School." They are going to report on the status of their school in relation to the problems and reforms identified in *Current Issues.* Each group should choose which research topic or topics to investigate. Sample topics are listed at the end of this activity; others could be added. Some topics will take more time to investigate than others, so divide them among student groups accordingly.

Student Handout 7—Research Outline can be used to help students organize their research. They should talk with teachers, counselors, administrators, and district personnel to learn pertinent information. After students have collected this information, they need to analyze the material and write down their thoughts. What changes do they think should be implemented to deal with the problems? What are the costs and/or benefits of such changes?

On the day of the mock TV report, have members from each group report to the class, taking the roles of reporters. Urge the rest of the class to question the reporters about their topic. If you have video equipment, tape the session.

To conclude the activity, ask students which reforms or changes they think should be implemented. Which ones may take time to implement? Which could be implemented quickly? How might the quality of their education be affected by the implementation of their ideas?

Sample Research Topics

- funding sources for the local school district and areas of possible budget cuts
- local district teachers' salaries compared to neighboring districts and to professions requiring similar educational levels
- local district testing program—what is tested, at what grade levels, and conclusions drawn from the test results
- school reforms in your state and district in the past ten years
- percentage of district funds used for students with special needs, including any construction costs incurred to make buildings more accessible for students with physical disabilities
- district and state drop-out and graduation rates and how they are calculated
- state and federal requirements your district must meet
- comparison of per-pupil costs in your district with similar neighboring districts
- programs for educating students who speak English as a second language
- charter schools, vouchers, or other alternative education programs in your district
- state requirements for teacher certification

2. Organize a debate over the issues raised by the key questions in the "Education" chapter. Do not tell students which side or which issue they will actually debate until five or ten minutes before the debate begins. This tactic will force students to prepare to debate all three issues from both sides. Urge them to read *Current Issues* carefully, along with other outside sources such as newspapers and newsmagazines. Debate the following statements.

- Public schools should provide bilingual education.
- Parents should be given vouchers to help them send their children to private schools.
- National teacher training should be reformed.

Select students for issues and sides in any way you think best—either by having them state their preferences or by drawing names out of a hat. You may want to select small teams of students to represent each topic and side and allow them to prepare their arguments as a team, or you may wish to have students debate one-on-one. After each issue has been debated, ask the class which arguments were most persuasive. Ask debaters if their views changed or if they better understand the position of the other side.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on education. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Regarding the question "Should the government give parents vouchers to pay for private schools?" ask students if they would attend a different school if they could choose. Why would they stay or why would they change? What would they look for in another school? Would their classmates leave in great numbers to go to other schools? Why or why not?

2. Supporters of charter schools or other alternative schools often say that schools should be run like a business. They believe that such schools would succeed only if they could "sell" themselves to potential customers. Divide your class into small groups and ask each group to decide what kind of charter school they would open if they could and then develop a plan to "sell" their school to the rest of the class. They should come up with an advertising campaign that will make their school look so attractive that everyone will want to go there. After groups have finished, have each one make its presentation in front of the class.

3. In addition to attending school, many of today's students work part-time. Have your class conduct a survey to find out how many students in your school have part-time jobs. You might want to divide the class into several groups, with each group surveying a particular segment of students. For example, each of three or four groups could survey one grade in your school. Or, there may be some other groups in your school that you think might be interesting to survey. Dividing respondents into particular groups like this will allow your class to compare statistics and observe trends. Surveys should find out the following from each respondent:

- hours worked per week
- time of day respondent works (during school hours, after school, evening, or early morning)
- type of work
- gender of student
- reason for working
- extracurricular activities
- effect of job on school work

You may add to or subtract from this list as you see fit. Tally survey results and post them on the board or make copies for all to see. Discuss the results and their implications in class. What conclusions can the students draw? It might be interesting for the school newspaper to publish the results of your class's survey.

HEALTH CARE AND AGING

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. describe the reasons for rapidly rising health care costs
2. examine why specific special interest groups supported or opposed President Clinton's plan for universal health insurance

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)
- baby-boom generation
- deductible
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- health maintenance organizations (HMOs)
- Health Insurance Portability Act
- managed care
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- "near elderly"
- patient's bill of rights

ACTIVITIES

1. Distribute **Student Handout 8—Student Survey.** Have students mark each statement "true" or "false." Point out that this is a survey measuring perception rather than a test measuring factual knowledge. When everyone is done, consider each item individually, polling the students on whether they think the statement is true or false. Encourage students to explain their answers, drawing from their own experiences if possible. After the discussion, explain to the class that all the statements are true.

Next, have students read the introduction to the "Health Care and Aging" chapter in *Current Issues.* Discuss with them the reasons for rising health care costs. Broaden the discussion by asking them how people can cope with this problem. Point out that most Americans are covered by private health insurance and that medical insurance is a common fringe benefit for employees, yet nearly 43 million Americans have no health insurance. Ask students to think of ways in which America's health care problems might affect them personally. List their responses on the board and discuss why they are important. Responses may include such concerns as increased taxes, family stresses caused by health care expenses, or reductions in other government services that provide benefits, such as student loans.

2. Early in his first term, President Clinton proposed a plan that would provide health insurance to all Americans. However, several special interest groups opposed his plan. Polls showed that middle-class Americans with health insurance feared reduced benefits and increased costs. Assign two or three students to research and present the perspective of one of the following groups to the class:

- public hospital administrators
- older Americans
- middle-class Americans with insurance
- part-time employees without medical insurance as part of their employee benefits
- Americans with disabilities
- private insurance companies
- small business owners

Using newspapers and journals, have students research how their assigned group reacted to the Clinton proposal. Why did their group support or oppose Clinton's plan? What did their group want from a health care plan? What did their group lobby against? Have each group state the argument for their special interest group. Encourage students to point out conflicts that their special interest group will have with other special interest groups. After all groups have had an opportunity to present their sides, ask students to develop a policy that they think would best protect the interests of all citizens.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on health care and aging in the United States. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. If possible, have students invite parents, grandparents, physicians, and insurance brokers to sit on a panel discussing health issues. Students should prepare questions regarding Medicare, Medicaid, and other types of health insurance. Questions can range from the technical to personal experiences with health costs and medical care. Select one group of students to compile and edit questions submitted by the class and another to ask questions of the panel. If possible, students should make most of the arrangements.

2. One proposal to cut Medicare costs to the government has been to make older Americans pay higher monthly premiums for supplemental coverage. Ask students to interview one older person who is eligible for Medicare and one younger working person to find out their opinions about that proposal. Students should then write a one-page report on their findings and read their reports to the class.

IMMIGRATION

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. develop a federal immigration policy based on examination of opinions
2. evaluate and implement government policies toward immigrants

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- assimilation
- employment-based visa
- EWI
- illegal immigrant
- 1996 Immigration Act
- nonimmigrant overstays
- official language
- Proposition 187
- quotas
- refugee

ACTIVITIES

1. To prepare for a mock hearing of a Presidential Immigration Commission, divide the class into the following seven groups:

- California farmers
- border patrol officers
- employers of illegal aliens
- labor union officials
- immigrants legally residing in the United States
- public officials of a U.S.-Mexican border city
- the Presidential Immigration Commission

The group representing the Presidential Immigration Commission should prepare by studying current immigration laws and discussing the procedures they will use in the hearing. Meanwhile, using information from *Current Issues* and other sources, the other six groups should do the following:

- Identify their interests in, and concerns with, current immigration laws.
- Develop arguments supporting the interests they have identified.
- Collect evidence supporting their arguments.
- Identify areas where they may be willing to negotiate and compromise.
- Speculate on arguments that their opponents may use and develop a response to each argument.

When the groups have completed their work, conduct a hearing by the Presidential Immigration Commission. The commission's job is to develop a federal immigration policy to recommend to the president and Congress. The commission should attempt to draft a policy that satisfies—or is at least an acceptable compromise for—everyone. Emphasize to students that all sides may have to sacrifice some policies to get others that they believe are more important. The commission should be familiar enough with current immigration legislation to make accurate recommendations. After each group has presented its position before the commission and all sides have had a chance to negotiate, the commission should come up with a final recommendation.

After the commission has presented its recommendation, ask students to abandon the identities they had in their groups and discuss the issues from their personal perspectives. They should refer to the pro/con positions they developed earlier. Has this exercise changed their positions? Why or why not? If they think the policy developed by the commission still presents a problem, what solution do they offer? Remind them of the need to satisfy a range of constituencies, as represented in the hearing. Finally, compare their solutions with recently enacted immigration laws. What are the similarities and differences?

Conclude with a discussion of what students learned from the mock hearing. Emphasize the value of compromise in a democracy and the difficulty of reaching decisions when many different opinions are held.

2. Divide the class into groups of no more than five students. Distribute **Student Handout 9—Immigration Candidates.** Briefly review the instructions. Tell students that their groups have fifteen minutes to decide which, if any, of the candidates should be admitted to the United States.

Then, discuss student responses. Encourage them to explain their choices and tell which subjects caused the most division among the group members. Next, broaden the discussion by asking why immigrants come to the United States. Point out that most reasons can be classified into four categories: political, economic, religious, or family reunification.

Explain that the present law sets up a system of preferences. First priority is given to family members of U.S. citizens, followed by family members of lawfully admitted aliens. Third priority is given to members of professions in the arts and sciences. Last priority is given to skilled and unskilled workers who fill a labor shortage in the United States. Ask the class, "Does this preference system force you to change your decisions about who should be allowed in and who should be denied entrance?"

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on immigration. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. To introduce the study of immigration, write the following questions on the board and have students share their responses.

- Who is an American?
- Are some people more American than others?

In the ensuing discussion, students may make ethnocentric or stereotypical statements, especially in response to the second question. Identify such statements. Ask students what negative consequences might result when some think they are more American than others. How might the community be affected by these consequences?

Emphasize the following points.

- An American, strictly speaking, is any inhabitant of North, South, or Central America. However, the term is also commonly used to mean U.S. citizen.
- A U.S. citizen is anyone who was born in the United States, born of a U.S. citizen, or naturalized.
- Every nonnaturalized citizen is a descendant of an immigrant.
- American Indians, although often called "Native Americans," are descendants of people who probably came over the Bering Strait from Asia thousands of years ago.
- More than 50 million people have immigrated to the United States.

To conclude the activity, discuss key questions from "Immigration" in *Current Issues.*

2. Invite a recent immigrant to speak to the class. Have students develop questions the day before the interview. Sample questions might include the following:

- Why did you come to the United States?
- What problems did you face or do you continue to face?
- How are you dealing with these problems?
- Do you believe that the United States is the land of opportunity?
- What has surprised you most about the United States?
- What do you miss most about your native country?
- If you knew then what you know now, would you still have come to the United States?

THE MEDIA

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. speculate on how historical or current events might have been affected if different choices had been made by those involved
2. compare the importance of a free press to the importance of government
3. discuss ethical choices in reporting a news story

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- First Amendment
- freedom of the press
- global village
- the Internet
- journalistic ethics
- "new media"
- national security
- Pentagon Papers
- sedition laws
- sensationalist journalism
- sound bite

ACTIVITIES

1. After students have read "The Media" in *Current Issues*, lead a brief discussion tracing the history of news dissemination in the United States and the effect a free press has had on the development of American democracy. Remind students of the influence of media on U.S. history, especially in areas such as political campaigns, wars, and scandal.

Next, hand out copies of **Student Handout 10—What Ifs About the Media.** Allow students enough time to complete the handout, either in class or as a homework assignment. They may work in pairs or larger groups. After students have completed the handouts, proceed through each of the "what ifs." Emphasize the significance of each event or situation and how different choices could have affected history or current events.

2. Write the following quote by Thomas Jefferson on the board:

> *Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.*

Then, lead a discussion based on his quote. The following questions may help focus the discussion.

- Could we get along without government if we had a totally free press in our society?
- What role did Jefferson think newspapers would play in the absence of government?
- What would government be like if our press were tightly restricted and the news controlled?
- Would Jefferson have the same idea today? Would he have believed the same way if he could have substituted "television" for "newspaper"?
- Do you agree with Jefferson? Why or why not?

3. In a brief discussion with your students, address the subject of ethics. Remind the class that journalists face ethical quandaries every day as they sort through what they should and should not include in the news. The best of them stay true to their goal of producing fair, accurate, and relevant news stories. But the pressures of getting a good story, meeting tight deadlines, and staying one step ahead of the competition sometimes make this difficult.

Next, read the paragraph below or write it on the board.

> *Imagine you are a reporter for a big-city newspaper. An airliner has crashed. Relatives of the victims gather at a hotel. Security is tight. Information is scarce. Pressure to scoop the competition is fierce. You see a way to get an exclusive story on the grieving families. But you will have to pretend to be a family member.*

Then ask students what they would do. The following choices might help focus the discussion.

- Yes. Get the story. You are not hurting anyone. Survivors need to talk about their grief.
- No. Do not lie about your identity. Respect the relatives' need to grieve in private.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the media. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Remind students that these days you can get news twenty-four hours a day. When U.S. soldiers landed in Somalia in 1992, television crews were waiting for them on the beach. CNN reported events live from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, as bombs fell and buildings burned. Some athletes and movie stars cannot take a step in public without photographers, reporters, and television crews following their every move. Some believe that the news media—specifically photographers—were partly to blame for the death of Princess Diana. How much news is too much?

Ask students if they can think of news stories they have seen that seemed to be "too much." Did they want to hear more? Were they turned off by the coverage? Does the public like this kind of news coverage? What motivates the reporters and their bosses?

2. Select several (as many as you need to engage everyone) current news stories; they may be local, national, or international. Then, divide the class into as many small groups as you have news stories. Assign one story to each group and have everyone gather different newspapers, watch several television news broadcasts, and review appropriate Internet coverage to find out how all these news sources cover the same story. Allow the groups several days to complete their research.

Then, ask each group to relate their findings to the rest of the class. Can they pick out coverage that was biased in any way? Was some coverage more sensationalistic than others? Can they pick out liberal or conservative views in the coverage?

It might be interesting to clip articles covering the same story from several daily newspapers and pin them to a bulletin board to show contrasting styles in news coverage over a longer period of time.

3. Organize classroom debates on the following statements.

- The "new media" have helped citizens become better informed.
- Journalistic ethics are declining.
- Television stations should give free airtime to political candidates.

Allow debaters adequate time to research their topics. Before beginning debates, select a moderator and a timekeeper to keep the debates orderly and to keep them moving. You may also want to select a panel of judges or simply poll the entire class at the end of each debate to determine a "winner." The affirmative, or "pro" side, should go first for a set length of time, followed by the negative, or "con" side, for the same length of time. Then allow each side two minutes for rebuttal. After a winner has been determined, briefly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments.

POVERTY

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. explain why various age and income groups often disagree on the role government should play in alleviating poverty
2. analyze the relationship between federally guaranteed welfare and finding work

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)
- earned income tax credit (EITC)
- food stamps
- Great Society
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- New Deal
- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996
- poverty level
- public housing
- Section 8
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

ACTIVITIES

1. Tell students that they are going to participate in a Senate hearing on domestic social problems. Some of the students will form a Senate committee, while the rest will represent a variety of interest groups expressing opinions about the following policies before the committee.

- State-based welfare is succeeding.
- The government should expand the earned income tax credit.
- The government should increase funding for public housing.

Divide students into the Senate committee and the following fictional special interest groups:

- National Association of Single Parents
- Union of Retired Americans
- Society of Urban Dwellers
- United States Taxpayers Association
- American Association for Minimum-Wage Earners

Allow some time for the special interest groups to prepare their statements about the three issues. Each should decide what policies are best for its members and prepare its statement accordingly. Meanwhile the Senate committee should prepare questions related to the issues at hand. Then, have each interest group appear separately before the Senate committee to present its views. After presenting its statement, each group should be questioned by members of the Senate committee.

After all groups have presented their views and been questioned by the committee, lead a class discussion about the hearing. Ask the class to discuss the best pro and con arguments and supporting data for each of the three issues. If they were senators, how would they vote on each issue and why? What has this simulation taught them about the ease or difficulty of establishing and funding social programs?

2. Write the following question on the board: *What is a generalization?* Then ask students to respond to it. Explain that if there are no supporting facts, a generalization may not be correct. After a brief discussion, distribute **Student Handout 11—Supporting Generalizations with Facts.** Make sure all students understand the instructions on the handout. Allow them time to work on the task in class, or assign it as homework.

Next, review student responses to the items on the handout. Try to ensure that both sides of each argument are equally represented. While responses will vary, some possible answers include the following:

- Agree—States may be able to provide financial assistance to their poor people until the states run into financial trouble; then the federal government must be there to provide the safety net. States are not prepared to find jobs for all the people they take off welfare roles.

  Disagree—Guaranteed checks from the federal government only perpetuate poverty. When people understand that their state will help them for only a limited amount of time, they will get jobs. States know best how to administer welfare to their people.

- Agree—Tax credits help raise the wages of low-income workers, making welfare payments to them unnecessary.

  Disagree—Many of the working poor earn only enough each year to get the tax credit. Then, they quit their jobs to go on welfare.

- Agree—Despite nearly sixty years of government social programs, millions of people still live in poverty. Programs such as AFDC provided reduced benefits to the working poor, thus discouraging welfare recipients from seeking work.

  Disagree—Most AFDC recipients were single mothers who supported themselves and their children almost entirely through the welfare system. If it were not for public housing, even more people would be homeless.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on poverty. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students call or visit their nearest public assistance, state welfare, public housing, and Social Security offices to find out basic information on the qualifications and procedures for applying for antipoverty or assistance programs. Programs to consider for this project include the following:

- state and local welfare benefits
- food stamps
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- public housing
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

If possible, students should get an application form and interview a worker in one of these offices about the application process. How would they feel if they were really applying for this program? Do they think benefits should be easier or harder to get? What was their general impression of the process?

2. Ask students to conduct an informal poll posing one of the following questions to a cross section of members of the community.

- What is your opinion of the government giving an income tax credit to a worker whose family income falls below the poverty level?
- What is your opinion of turning control of welfare over to the states?

Care should be taken to include several different age groups in the poll, ranging from teenagers to retired people. Have students write up the results of the poll, creating a table or graph to better illustrate their findings. Some direct quotes from survey participants should be included.

3. Have students research the problems associated with welfare and welfare reform and then draw up their own welfare reform proposal. Ask students to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the welfare reform law of 1996 and compare it with their own proposals.

WOMEN AND MINORITIES

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. define affirmative action
2. discuss discrimination and steps taken to combat it

ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by asking students to define "affirmative action." Relate affirmative action to the American belief in equality of opportunity. Discuss with students whether racial and ethnic groups and women who have been victims of discrimination should be compensated in some way by the government.

To focus the discussion, distribute **Student Handout 12—Discrimination Cases.** Allow enough time for your students to consider each situation. Then, discuss the issues raised in the handout. The following questions may help you lead the discussion.

- If you support affirmative action for an African American or Mexican American in any of the cases, would you also support it for a white American whose family is dysfunctional and has a low income and who attended a bad school?
- Do minority Americans who do not come from low-income families or who did not go to bad schools have a moral claim against society because their ancestors were oppressed?

Encourage debate on each case and remind students that emotion alone is not an adequate basis for argument. What conclusion can students draw from this discussion? Why is this an emotional issue? Relate the discussion in class to a debate Congress may have on affirmative action, quotas, and civil rights.

2. Begin by having students discuss their own experiences. Have they been victims of discrimination? If so, in what ways? How did they react to their experiences? Do they think they have ever knowingly discriminated against someone else? What caused them to do so? Do students have different expectations for males and females? Do students feel discomfort when they are around a disabled person? Do they feel disabled students should be mainstreamed?

Follow this opening discussion by telling students to talk to their parents and grandparents or others in the community about what they remember about discrimination, the civil rights movement, and how women's roles have changed in their lifetimes. They should jot down notes as they talk to members of their family and community, and then share this informal oral history with the class the next day. How do the stories compare?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- affirmative action
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- domestic partners
- Equal Pay Act
- hate crimes
- "Jim Crow" laws
- poll tax
- Proposition 209
- protected classes
- reverse discrimination
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
- wage gap

Finally, divide the class into discussion groups of four or five for the purpose of defining prejudice and discrimination, talking about personal attitudes, and developing a short report on how prejudice comes about and what can or should be done to prevent it. Each group (or you) should choose a group leader to keep the discussion moving and orderly and to write the final report. As group discussions proceed, students should jot down notes to help them and their group leader prepare the paper. The reports should define prejudice and tell what kinds of discrimination exist today. They should tell who the likely victims of discrimination are and will be and speculate on what causes discrimination. Finally, the reports should offer solutions to discrimination and prejudice in the United States. After groups have had sufficient time, ask each group leader to report on his or her group's discussion and be prepared to answer questions from the rest of the class.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on women and minorities. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Select a group of four or five students to engage in a panel discussion on how changing social, economic, and political conditions require changing interpretations of the Constitution. They will need to plan their discussion and do some research on their topic. See the suggestions for conducting a panel discussion on page 15 in "Instructional Strategies" in this guide.

2. Invite speakers to discuss both sides of the same-sex marriage issue. Because this is a sensitive and controversial topic, make sure your school administration approves of your plans. Review student questions ahead of time so there are no surprise questions for the speakers.

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DEFENSE

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. define national security
2. compare and contrast views on national security issues
3. evaluate the current defense policies of the United States

ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by asking students to pretend that they are responsible for the defense of a nation. Without giving them any more information, ask them what strategies they would use to defend their country. Categorize student responses and write them on the board. Likely categories include:

- build up arms—prepare for war
- use offensive tactics—"get them before they get us"
- negotiate treaties
- disarm—become neutral and nonthreatening
- develop defense fortifications

Point out that defending a nation is only one aspect of national security. Emphasize that national security is a complex concept with many facets.

Next, distribute **Student Handout 13—Defense Survey.** Allow students a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. When everyone is finished, encourage students to share their responses. This activity should get students to think about national security issues. The success of the activity depends very much on the debriefing. Try to bring out the following points and ask these questions.

- Military strength does not ensure success. (United States in Vietnam, Soviet Union in Afghanistan)
- The national security interests of oil-producing nations may be at odds with the interests of the United States.
- Should U.S. troops get involved in UN or NATO peacekeeping missions if U.S. national interest is not an issue? Should Americans care about peace in places like Bosnia or Kosovo?
- If economic warfare is a greater threat to national security, how can the United States best combat this threat? Which country today poses the biggest economic threat to American security?
- Should some of the financial resources of the United States be shifted from the military budget to support democratic movements around the world? Should domestic programs be cut to provide increased funds for foreign aid?

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- catastrophic terrorism
- Cold War
- multinational peacekeeping
- national missile defense system
- national security
- NATO
- NATO partnerships
- nuclear deterrence
- peace engagement
- two-war strategy
- War Powers Act

Conclude by asking students to reevaluate their ideas about national security. Have any of them changed their strategies as a result of this activity? They should recognize that national security means protection of vital economic and political interests as well as defense of the nation's borders.

2. Divide the class into five groups. Assign one of the following defense-related topics to each group:

- increasing defense spending
- reducing the U.S. troop presence in western Europe, Japan, and South Korea
- using the U.S. military as peacekeepers in troubled areas
- developing a national missile defense system
- reducing the U.S. nuclear arsenal

Each group's task is to prepare brief (three- to five-minute) arguments both for and against each issue. Have them present these arguments to the class. Tell the class they will secretly vote on each issue at the end of each group's presentation. No class discussion will be allowed until all the ballots are in, because judgments and criticisms could affect student voting.

Students will vote with paper ballots. The votes will be tallied and listed on the board, so students can see how their class voted on the issues without peer pressure.

You may need to help the groups prepare their oral arguments to ensure a balance of views for each side. Once the votes are tallied, have students discuss the results on each issue. Do any of the results surprise them? Do they think results would be different if the voting had not been confidential? Why or why not?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on defense. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Students should take on the role of a presidential candidate. Have them prepare a campaign speech in which they address three defense-related issues:

- adopting a new defense strategy
- using U.S. troops in peacekeeping missions
- increasing defense spending

Have students write rough drafts of their speeches and hand them in. Select the best three or four for oral presentation.

2. Have students interview at least five friends (preferably from outside class) to learn their opinions about serving in the military. They might ask for their friends' views on mandatory service, voluntary service, college scholarships, retirement benefits, women in combat, and homosexuals in the military. Ask your students to write a news article titled "Students Offer Opinions About the Military," based on what they found out in their interviews and in their readings in *Current Issues* and other sources. The goal is to incorporate fact and opinion in one article. The most thorough and well-written articles can be submitted to the school or community newspaper.

3. In recent years, the branches of the U.S. armed services have been unable to fill their enlistment quotas. Enlistments commonly fall several thousand new recruits short each month. Lead a class discussion asking students what incentives would entice them to join the military. How many have given some thought to joining? What branch is most appealing? Why? What would stop them from enlisting? What advice would they have for military recruiters as they set policies and goals?

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. define and discuss democracy
2. define human rights and how Americans gained those rights
3. examine the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and compare it with the U.S. Bill of Rights
4. discuss justification for and difficulties in bringing an international leader to trial as a war criminal

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- democratization
- free-market economy
- genocide
- International Criminal Tribunal
- International Religious Freedom Act
- human rights
- national interest
- self-determination
- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- war crimes

ACTIVITIES

1. Write *democracy* on the board. Then ask students to call out basic features common to democratic nations. List their responses on the board. (The list will probably include items such as free elections, majority rule, multiple political parties, government based on a constitution, and so forth.) After a complete list has been compiled, briefly discuss the features of democracy. Emphasize the difficulties even Americans have in making democracy work, despite more than 200 years of experience. Do students think Americans are apathetic about their democracy? Why or why not? Why are voter turnouts in U.S. elections so low? Do students think democracy is an efficient form of government, able to meet the needs of the people while providing the nation with peace and security? Ask them to speculate on the future of such new democracies as Russia, Haiti, and South Africa. What should the United States do to promote the success of new democracies around the world?

2. Begin by explaining to students that in the United States, concern for human rights is one of the foundations of the American democracy. Write the following quotation from the Declaration of Independence on the board.

> *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are . . . endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

Then, lead a discussion about the quotation, asking students who wrote it and where it came from. What did Jefferson mean by "unalienable rights"? What rights do Americans have? Has the United States as a nation upheld Jefferson's notion of rights?

Next, explain to the class that in December 1948, the newly established United Nations adopted its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Distribute **Student**

Handout 14—United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. After students have had time to read the declaration and complete the exercises and questions at the end of the handout, begin a discussion based on their responses. When discussing the declaration, point out that applying the ideals listed in the document is difficult.

3. Begin by spending a few minutes discussing events in Yugoslavia beginning in early 1999 or have students turn to pages 290-3 in "Europe and Russia" and read the approprate section. Ethnic Albanians, who make up a 90 percent majority in the Serbian province of Kosovo, demanded more autonomy from the central government of Serbia. The Kosovars, being of differing ethnic and religious backgrounds from the Serbs, believe that they should have more self-determination in running their country. Serbia's president Slobodan Milosovic sent troops into Kosovo to put down an uprising there, and over the course of time began to force thousands of Kosovars from their homes and into neighboring provinces and countries. He said that his actions were justified because Kosovo was part of his country and he had the right to use force to put down what he called a civil war. The United States and its NATO allies disagreed, and when unable to get Milosovic to agree to a peace treaty for the region, launched air attacks against Serbia. Many world leaders have called Milosovic a war criminal for his mistreatment of the Kosovars and his earlier actions in the other former Yugoslav regions of Bosnia and Croatia. (Add any other information you may think appropriate.)

Write the following question on the board:

Should Slobodan Milosovic be tried as a war criminal?

Lead a discussion focusing on what makes someone a war criminal. Are presidents of nations war criminals if they order their troops to attack and kill people they consider enemies? Do they have a right to put down a civil war in their own countries? Do they have a right to make war on civilians? What line must be crossed to consider someone a war criminal? Do world leaders have a right to brand another nation's leader a war criminal?

After discussing the issue, have half the students answer the question "yes" and give their reasons and the other half answer "no" and give their reasons. When everyone has finished writing, ask students to read their reasons aloud. Although some may not personally agree with the side they were defending, it should become clear that judging the actions of civilian and military leaders in the time of war is not easy and may be risky.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on democracy and human rights. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Divide a bulletin board into five sections and place the name of each of the following countries above one of the sections: China, Cuba, Indonesia, Russia, Serbia. Then, divide the class into five groups, with each group being responsible for one of the countries. Students should scan newspapers and newsmagazines each day looking for stories relating to democracy and human rights in their group's country. Then, after either clipping those stories or photocopying them, they should pin them in the appropriate column on the board. Spend a few minutes each day or week discussing the articles that are going up and why they are important. Discuss how certain stories may affect the United States and the people who live here.

2. Ask students to write a one-page reaction to the following quotation by Martin Luther King Jr.:

> "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Ask for volunteers to read their papers in class.

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify types of pollution and their respective sources and effects
2. examine costs and benefits of certain international environmental actions
3. discuss steps they can take to protect the environment
4. explain how environmental issues are examples of interdependence and individual civic responsibility

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- acid rain
- biodiversity
- CFCs
- Earth Summit
- Endangered Species Act
- global warming
- greenhouse effect
- Kyoto Protocol
- megadiverse country
- Montreal Protocol
- nuclear waste
- ozone layer

ACTIVITIES

1. To introduce the unit, have students look for examples of pollution in their school. Answers might range from graffiti on bathroom walls to litter around the school building. Write their answers on the board and ask students to place items on the list in categories (visual, noise, air, and so forth).

Then ask students to determine the causes of the various types of pollution listed. Causes may include careless students or teachers, cars in the parking lot, improper disposal of trash, and others. Which of the pollutants do they find most offensive? Why? What can be done to stop the polluting?

Next ask students to think about their community. What types of pollution identified on their school list also apply to the community? Are the causes and sources the same? What additional pollutants exist in the community? What are their causes? Which community pollutants concern them most? Is anything being done about pollution levels in the community? If not, why not?

Now, students should think about the larger region in which their community is located. Are there other types of pollution that affect their region that have not already been mentioned? What are their causes? Is anything being done about them? If not, why not? What do environmentalists mean when they tell people to "think globally, act locally"?

Finally, ask students to draw tentative conclusions from the discussion. What more would they like to know? Why is the environment an important issue? If students are not familiar with the meanings of the words in the "Terms and Concepts" list, review the meanings with them.

2. Tell students they are going to examine costs and benefits of government actions that will clearly have an effect on the world's environment. First, divide the class into three equal-sized groups and place each group in different parts of the room. Then, divide each group into proponents and opponents of the action they are considering.

Distribute a copy of **Student Handout 15—Costs and Benefits of Protecting the World's Environment** to each student. After group topics have been chosen, give them time to complete the handout. They should list the costs and benefits for both sides in their issue and then prepare an argument to present to the rest of the class as to why they think their side is right and the other side is wrong.

After group work is finished, proceed with each topic. Call one representative from each side to the front of the room and ask each person to tell the class his or her group's best arguments for its position. After each student has finished, allow the class a few minutes to ask questions. Then, with a show of hands, ask the class if they support the government action that was taken or if they oppose it. Conclude by pointing out the difficulties of solving environmental problems, especially when they involve many nations and billions of people.

3. Have the class select the local environmental issue they think is most pressing. Students should gather information on this problem. Once they understand the basic problem, they should develop a list of questions they want to ask local politicians, business representatives, and environmentalists about the issue. Then ask students to choose one or more of the following activities.

- Have students write or call offices of their U.S. and state senators and representatives to find out where these legislators stand on the matter and what they propose as a solution. Legislators will likely make their opinions known over the phone or in follow-up letters.
- If the issue they chose is affected by local businesses, have students contact one or two of the businesses and ask the company or companies to send representatives to talk to the class.
- Have students find out which local environmental groups are active in their area. Is there a branch of the Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Greenpeace, National Wildlife Federation, Defenders of Wildlife, or Friends of the Earth nearby? Students should contact one of the environmental groups and invite a representative to the class to discuss the local issue. Students should prepare questions for the speakers, asking what their role is in the issue, what they suggest should be done, and what has been done.
- Ask interested students to write a letter to the editor of their local or school newspaper explaining how this problem affects the community, the state, the nation, and the world.

Once students have concluded their research and interviews, have them create a display that is based on the facts they have gathered and the actions they think should be taken.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the global environment. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Ask students to identify significant environmental problems facing the United States today. Once the list is on the board, have the class rank the problems. Then, ask each student to take the list—with the order of issues scrambled—and give it to five other people of different age groups. They should ask each person to rank the list of problems.

Back in class, collect all the lists, divide them into age groups, and try to determine if there is a pattern to how each age group ranked the problems. Put the resulting lists on the board or on large sheets of paper and hang them on the wall. Did the age groups perceive the significance of environmental concerns differently? Have students speculate as to why this might be. How might age and experience affect one's perceptions? Did any of the rankings surprise the class? How might they account for this unexpected ranking? Do any of the rankings indicate lack of information about the issues? Why might this be?

2. Begin by telling the class that acid rain falling on Canada is harming that nation's lakes and streams, forests, farmland, and structures. Most experts have concluded that much of the air pollution contributing to Canada's acid rain is being generated by factories, power plants, and automobiles in the United States. Then, as an assignment, have each student pretend he or she is an official of the Canadian government and has been asked by the prime minister to write a letter of protest to the U.S. government regarding this situation. Letters should lay out the problem, explain the Canadian government's position, and be specific about what Canada's government wants the United States to do. After letters have been written, ask several students to read theirs in class. Conclude by asking the students what they think the United States should do about the acid rain falling not only on Canada but also on the northeastern part of the United States.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. compare and contrast protectionism and free trade
2. evaluate U.S. policy options to reduce the trade deficit by negotiating trade agreements, erecting trade barriers, and increasing productivity

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- European Union
- exchange rate
- fast track
- free trade
- Free Trade Area of the Americas
- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)
- managed trade
- North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
- protectionism
- trade deficit
- World Trade Organization (WTO)

ACTIVITIES

1. Use this activity to discuss costs and benefits of free trade and protectionism. Begin by pointing out to the class that (1) the way in which a nation views tariffs may depend on how industrialized the nation already is; (2) some nations have used protective trade barriers to help them industrialize; and (3) a highly industrialized country may promote free trade knowing that less developed nations cannot compete.

Create two columns on the board under the heads "Free Trade" and "Protectionism." Then, in a class discussion, ask your students to determine the effects of these two policies for each of the following people (write responses on the board):

- a U.S. manufacturer dependent on export sales
- a U.S. manufacturer receiving stiff competition from imported goods
- consumers living in a highly industrialized nation
- an unemployed American factory worker
- the owner of a technologically new industry with limited financial resources

Conclude by pointing out that because of the economic diversity of the United States, neither a completely free-trade nor a protectionist policy will satisfy all sectors of the nation. When the complexities of international affairs are added, easy solutions are invariably inadequate.

2. Inform students that they have just been appointed to the president's Council of Economic Advisers. The president has warned them that the continuing high trade deficit threatens the economic well-being of the nation. Jobs are being lost, tax revenues are decreasing, and the economy is being threatened. Students should find the best solution to the trade deficit. The president has identified three possible routes for addressing the problem. He wants his advisers to investigate each of the three; however, he does not want them to act as an advocate for any particular one. Rather, they are to investigate the costs and benefits associated with implementing each approach and report their findings to the president and the rest of the class.

Distribute **Student Handout 16—Fact-Finding Sheet.** Then, divide the class into three groups, each investigating one of the following approaches the federal government might take:

- negotiating new trade agreements with other nations whereby they would promise to open up their markets to more U.S. goods and services
- instituting protectionist measures to keep cheaper foreign goods out of the United States
- helping U.S. industries increase productivity by giving them money for research and development

Each group should divide in half, with one half looking for the strengths of the approach and the other half looking for its weaknesses. Remind students that the purpose is not to convince other group members that their position is the right one, but simply to gather as much information as possible to present to the group. Urge them to use the student handout to help them complete their tasks. After groups have completed their research, each should come up with specific policies based on their findings. Each group should then take its turn presenting its findings and recommendations to the entire class. They should recommend specific policies—for example, how the government will help industry increase its productivity—and evaluate the usefulness of each policy.

After the three groups have shared their findings with the class, lead a class discussion on the value of each of the approaches. Then, with a show of hands, poll the class on which approach they think will work best to reduce the trade deficit.

Conclude by reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of students' suggestions. What were the most important lessons of this unit? Why is international trade a difficult issue to resolve?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on international trade. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. The president is the individual most able to influence American trade policy. Have students choose one of the following activities.

- Abraham Lincoln supposedly said: "I don't know much about the tariff. But I do know that when I buy a coat from England, I have the coat and England has the money. But when I buy a coat in America, I have the coat and America has the money." Write a hypothetical letter to Lincoln explaining the virtues of free trade and the dangers of protectionism.

- Recent presidents have been strong supporters of free trade. Have students write a letter to the president stating why they think free trade is good or bad for American industry and if he should continue or change his present trade policy. Students may wish to send their letters to the president.

2. Students should identify local residents whose livelihoods are affected by international trade, and invite several to speak to their class. This group could include a factory owner, a retailer, a banker, a factory worker, a farmer, and so forth. Ask students to prepare questions for the speakers in advance. You should make clear to speakers exactly what you want them to talk about; show them students' questions before they speak. Tell your speakers the topics that you have been discussing in class so they stay focused on issues with which students are familiar. Urge speakers to ask questions of students, getting them to think about all sides of a particular issue. If you have a speaker who strongly favors free trade, you should seek another speaker who believes in protectionism. Students should look for obvious differences of opinion between business owners and workers regarding protectionism or free trade.

3. U.S. relations with China have been strained in recent years by a number of issues, including (1) the large U.S. trade deficit with China; (2) human rights practices in China; and (3) accusations by American companies about Chinese manufacturers pirating U.S. intellectual property.

Ask students to gather newspaper and magazine articles regarding these issues. Discuss the articles as they come in and then pin them to a bulletin board. After you think your class has gained sufficient knowledge about the U.S.-China trade situation, organize a debate on the following statement.

- The United States should not extend MFN trade status to China until the Chinese government takes steps to address U.S. concerns about human rights and piracy of intellectual property, such as music CDs and computer software.

See the section titled "Debate" on page 15 of the "Introduction" to this guide to learn one way to proceed with your activity.

WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. analyze the proliferation of weapons and express an opinion based on facts
2. survey the community and analyze the results of the survey

ACTIVITIES

1. Tell students that you are going to read several statements relating to weapons proliferation and nuclear war. After each statement is read, students will move about the room on a continuum that ranges from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Students who strongly agree with the statement should line up on the far left side of the room. Students who strongly disagree should line up on the far right side of the room. Students who do not have a strong opinion either way should line up in the middle of the room.

After directions are given, read one of the opinion statements and allow time for students to move to a point on the continuum. When the three lines have stabilized, ask several students from each line to explain their positions. Allow students to interact and ask questions of each other, but remind them to respect differing opinions and that this is a discussion, not a debate. After discussing each statement, read the fact statement that follows each opinion statement. Then ask students if they now want to move to another position on the continuum. Move on to the next statement and repeat the process.

Statements:

- Nuclear proliferation is a serious threat to world peace.

  Fact: Today at least seven countries have nuclear weapons; ten or more other countries are suspected of having the capability of making nuclear weapons now or in the near future.
- It is possible for countries such as the United States to sell nuclear technology to other countries without the threat of an increase in nuclear weapons worldwide.

  Fact: The United Nations created the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure that members do not use nuclear technology to make weapons.
- Treaties are a good way to control the testing, manufacture, and acquisition of nuclear weapons.

  Fact: As many as eight international treaties have been written since 1959. India and Pakistan are the only nations outside the "nuclear club" that have exploded atomic devices since 1964.
- The United States should set an example for the world by completely stopping sales of conventional weapons.

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- antiballistic missile defense system
- Baruch Plan
- Chemical Weapons Convention
- Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
- conventional weapons
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- nuclear club
- nuclear technology
- UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty
- START II

Fact: Many nations besides the United States sell conventional weapons. Sellers' economies depend a great deal on the profits such sales bring.

- Enemy nations who have nuclear weapons would hesitate to use them for fear of nuclear retaliation.

  Fact: The Soviet Union and the United States refrained from military conflict for more than forty years. During the Persian Gulf War, the allied powers and Iraq (which is suspected of having nuclear weapon capabilities) refrained from using nuclear weapons.

2. Begin by telling students that they are going to conduct a survey to find out community attitudes about nuclear and conventional weapons, weapons proliferation, and a missile defense system. Give each student a copy of **Student Handout 17—Community Survey.** Review the handout in class, pointing out the items that need to be checked each time and the procedure they should follow. The instructions are at the top of the handout. Point out that each student should ask three people the questions on the handout. Urge them to avoid contacting a person that someone else has already polled.

Allow adequate time for students to complete their surveys. Then, after everyone has finished, record the results on the board and discuss the findings. Look for attitudinal differences among age groups. Which group seems to be most "hawkish" on the issues? Which group seems to be made up of "doves"? What might account for the differences in opinion? Are people in the community informed or misinformed on certain issues?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on weapons proliferation. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Two regions of the world, Latin America and the South Pacific, as well as some individual cities around the world, have established "nuclear-free zones." Within these zones, testing, manufacturing, and acquiring nuclear weapons are banned, and nations possessing nuclear weapons have agreed not to bring such weapons into the zones.

Ask students to call local governments to find out if their community or a nearby community is considered a nuclear-free zone. If so, obtain a copy of the statement(s) declaring the community as nuclear-free. If not, divide the class into groups of four or five to write a nuclear-free class statement for your school or community.

Ask groups to read their statements and discuss them. Do all students agree with such statements? What arguments can they give opposing the declaration of nuclear-free zones?

2. Organize one or more debates on the following statements.

- The United States should develop and deploy a national missile defense system.
- The United States should limit its sales of conventional weapons.
- The United States should stop selling nuclear materials and technology.

Before beginning the debates, allow students adequate time to research their positions and prepare their arguments. The affirmative side should speak first, followed by the negative side. Both sides should be given the same amount of time. Allow each side to then present a short rebuttal. After each debate has been completed, ask the remainder of the class which side they think "won." Discuss the strong and weak points of each argument.

WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. identify characteristics of developing nations
2. explain the relationship between foreign aid and American interests
3. evaluate U.S. policy options regarding distribution of foreign aid

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- bilateral aid
- developing countries
- family planning
- humanitarian assistance
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- multilateral aid
- North-South conflict
- national interest
- security assistance
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Food Summit

ACTIVITIES

1. Use a large world map to point out to students that most of the world's most impoverished nations are south of the Tropic of Cancer. Briefly discuss the terms "North" and "South." Ask why Americans and the U.S. government should have any interest in developing nations. In addition to exploring humanitarian concerns, discuss national security and economic security as factors in U.S. foreign aid politics. Students should consider how terrorism might become a more serious problem as developing countries struggle to develop. What could be the effect of increased terrorism on their development? Ask students to read the "World Poverty and Foreign Aid" chapter in *Current Issues* and jot down questions they would like to have answered while studying this unit. Have students share their questions with the class to determine common concerns.

2. Tell students that they are going to use a variety of resources to examine U.S. foreign aid policies and economic development in less developed countries and then write a position statement based on their research. First, divide the class in half. One half of the class will represent U.S. government and military officials. The other half will represent government officials from developing nations such as Albania, Bangladesh, Chad, Haiti, and Peru. Divide each half into three subgroups and assign each subgroup one of the following policy statements.

- The United States should eliminate foreign aid.
- The United States should give more money to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- The United States should promote family planning in less developed countries to slow population growth.

Distribute and urge everyone to complete **Student Handout 18—Cost/Benefit Chart** as they complete their assignments. Give students sufficient time to research their topics and prepare position statements with supporting evidence. Each group should be prepared to state its position and answer questions from the rest of the class.

The group representing U.S. officials should consider the following questions as it analyzes its information and develops its policy statement.

- What are the costs and benefits of this policy?
- How will U.S. citizens view this policy?
- What conditions should the United States impose for nations receiving aid?
- Should foreign aid decisions be based on the national interest of the United States or of the whole world?
- After deciding the U.S. position, what are the strongest pieces of evidence to support it?

Representatives of developing countries should consider the following questions as they analyze their policy statement.

- Is it reasonable to expect that developed countries with their own poverty problems should expend their resources to help less developed countries?
- What arguments can developing nations offer to counter U.S. policy decisions that may not be in their best interest?
- How would developing nations respond to criticisms that some of the problems they face are a result of a social structure that allows a few people to control most of the wealth, and that aid programs simply help those who do not need it?
- Since it is unlikely that U.S. aid will be distributed evenly, what criteria do developing nations suggest for determining who receives it?

After each group has presented and supported its position and responded to questions, conduct a general class discussion. How do students personally feel about the issues? Is there any consensus? Have any changed their minds about foreign aid concerns since the introductory activity?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on world poverty and foreign aid. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students investigate conditions (geographic, economic, demographic, political, cultural) that have inhibited the development of the poorest of the world's nations. They should look at countries such as Bangladesh, Burundi, Ethiopia, Haiti, Nepal, and Sudan, and then prepare an essay pointing out the conditions and recommending what type of foreign aid programs they think would best help these nations. They should conclude by speculating on how likely it is that the nation they investigated will receive such aid.

2. Divide students into groups of four or five. This activity should be done in two parts, possibly over two days. The purpose is to encourage students to make some decisions about U.S. foreign aid.

Have students use a world map, *Current Issues,* newspapers, and newsmagazines to compile a list of nations that they think should receive foreign aid from the United States. Particular attention should be paid to countries in Africa, Latin America, Southern Asia, the Middle East, and eastern Europe, including the former Soviet republics.

Once each group agrees on its list, ask students to place an "N" before those countries where foreign aid will be based on need, a "P" where it will be based on politics, or an "NP" if both apply.

Then tell groups that they have a total of 100 points to assign as U.S. foreign aid money. Have them decide how many points should be spent for each country on their list. They should use all 100 points. When groups have finished, bring the whole class together and have each group share its choices with the class. Write the names of all the nations selected on the board and tally and average the points the groups spent on each country. In this way, arrive at a class ranking for foreign aid recommendations. Compare the students' list to actual U.S. foreign aid expenditures, which are detailed on the chart on page 255 in *Current Issues.*

EAST ASIA

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. discuss reasons for and possible solutions to the U.S.-Japan trade imbalance
2. evaluate the important role Japan plays in the U.S. economy
3. debate U.S. policies toward Japan, China, and North Korea

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- "Asian flu"
- demilitarized zone
- "East Asian miracle"
- human rights
- most favored nation (MFN) status
- Mutual Security Treaty
- "one China"
- Tiananmen Square
- trade deficit

ACTIVITIES

1. Write *United States* and *Japan* on the board. Turning first to the Japan column, ask students to call out brand names of Japanese products that Americans commonly buy. Write their responses on the board. They will probably have little trouble coming up with such names as Toyota, Nissan, Honda, and Sony. Then, focusing on the United States column, ask them to call out brand names of American products they think are commonly sold in Japan. It will soon become evident that coming up with the second list is more difficult. You might want to have everyone turn to the chart on page 265 in *Current Issues,* "U.S.-Japan Trade." Point out that while the United States did export $57.9 billion worth of goods and services to Japan in 1998, Japan mainly bought raw materials such as lumber, foodstuffs, and scrap metals. However, there are U.S. manufacturers, such as Boeing and Motorola, that successfully sell their products in Japan. Ask students what they think causes the trade imbalance between Japan and the United States. Are the Japanese being unfair? Is the trade imbalance a problem? Can the president or Congress do anything about reducing the trade deficit with Japan? Can the American people do anything about it?

2. Divide your class into three groups and tell them that each group is going to debate one of the following issues.

- The United States should withdraw its troops from Japan.
- The United States should grant permanent MFN status to China.
- The United States should end foreign aid to North Korea.

Each group should be divided into an affirmative team and a negative team. Debaters should use information in the "East Asia" chapter of *Current Issues* as well as outside sources to prepare their arguments.

When all research has been completed, begin the debates. The affirmative side should go first for five to ten minutes, followed by the negative side for five to ten minutes. Each side will then have a short period of time for rebuttal. If you find that too many students are not going to have a chance to speak, you may want several to serve as moderators, timekeepers, and judges.

After each debate, briefly discuss the topic with the whole class and ask students which side they thought was the "winner."

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on East Asia. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students research which Asian companies are operating in your state. A list of foreign-owned firms can be obtained from the regional office of the U.S. Department of Commerce or your state's commerce or economic development office. The information gathered by students should include the cities in which these companies are located, the products they make, and the number of workers they employ. Ask the class to evaluate the economic effect of these businesses on the state or community.

2. Ask students to write a case study about a particular Japanese-owned company located in your community or state. The case study should include specifics regarding why the company decided to locate where it did. What problems did the community face when the company decided to locate there? How has the community benefited? How has the company benefited?

3. Write the names of the following Asian nations on the board: *Japan, China, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia,* and *Thailand.* Also list China's new province of *Hong Kong.* Then, ask students to study the list and write an answer to the following question.

- If you lived in East Asia, in which of these places would you want to live? Why?

Ask for volunteers to read their answers aloud. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the countries they picked. Search for as many different responses as possible.

EUROPE AND RUSSIA

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. choose a U.S. foreign policy response to a European event and defend their choice
2. examine the pros and cons of using U.S. troops in Yugoslavia
3. discuss differences in U.S. and Russian foreign policy regarding events in Europe and Russia

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Balkans
- Cold War
- containment
- Dayton Accords
- economic "shock therapy"
- ethnic cleansing
- the euro
- European Union (EU)
- Kosovo
- Maastricht Treaty
- Marshall Plan
- nationalism
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

ACTIVITIES

1. After students have read "Europe and Russia" in *Current Issues,* give each a copy of **Student Handout 19—U.S. Response.** Then, with your students working individually, in pairs, or in groups, allow them time to respond to the scenarios on the handout and write their reasons for choosing a particular U.S. response. Or you may want to use the handout as a homework assignment.

After everyone has finished the assignment, go through each scenario in class, asking students what they think the United States should do if such an event were to occur. Invite students or groups with differing opinions to state why they chose the response they did and rejected other responses.

2. Organize a role-playing activity in which participants will try to convince the president of the United States to either (1) keep thousands of U.S. troops in Bosnia and Kosovo until peace is solidly in place or (2) get American forces out of the region completely because helping to keep peace in the Yugoslav region is not a vital U.S. interest. Students will play the following roles:

- **the president,** who will preside over the discussion, asking questions of both sides and making the final decision
- **the secretary of state,** who favors keeping U.S. troops in the region for as long as necessary because he or she believes doing so is in the national interest of the United States
- **a member of Congress,** who thinks U.S. troops should leave the Yugoslav region as soon as possible and claims to have the support of a majority in Congress; the member does not belong to the same party as the president
- **the chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,** who will go along with the president's decision but worries about the safety of U.S. troops if they stay in the region for an extended period
- **the ambassador to the United States from Greece (which is a member of NATO),** who believes U.S. troops are necessary to bring peace to the region and worries about religious and ethnic conflict spreading in Europe, but thinks the presence of U.S. and NATO troops over an extended period could hinder the creation of a permanent peace agreement

After students have been assigned their roles, give them time to prepare their arguments. Each should be able to state his or her case in two minutes. The president should give each participant a chance to speak and may ask questions of any of the participants. After the president has heard from each person, he or she should weigh the testimony, state the administration's plan, and tell why he or she reached that decision. Conduct as many sessions of this activity as are necessary to involve all students.

3. For this activity, ask students to work in groups of three. One person will represent the European perspective, one the Russian perspective, and one the American perspective. Give students twenty minutes to meet with their group members to discuss the following issues from all three perspectives: (1) whether forcing Serbian troops from Kosovo is in the U.S. national interest; (2) whether the United States should send more economic aid to eastern Europe and Russia; and (3) whether NATO should expand its military reach.

Then, have all the "Europeans" get together in one part of the room, all the "Russians" in another part, and all the "Americans" in a third part of the room. Each side should select a secretary to record their "official" reaction to each policy issue. They should consider how each issue has affected them in the past and how it will affect them in the future. What pleases or angers them about these policies?

Have the three secretaries present their side's reactions to each issue. Encourage other students to participate by questioning the secretary or by elaborating on what the secretary is saying. This activity should enable students to see the validity of different points of view and how this can contribute to the complexity of an issue.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on Europe and Russia. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Organize classroom debates on the following statements.

- The United States should be militarily involved in the Balkans.
- The United States should change its policy toward Russia.
- NATO should expand its military reach.

Before beginning the debates, allow students adequate time to research their positions and prepare their arguments. The affirmative side should go first, followed by the negative side. Both sides should be given the same amount of time. Allow each side to then present a short rebuttal. After each debate has been completed, ask the remainder of the class which side they think "won." Discuss the strong and weak points of each argument.

2. Ask students to research newspapers, magazines, and other sources for stories dealing with the situation in Northern Ireland. They should look for stories detailing the history of the conflict and recent attempts by various sides to end it. Urge students to look for stories about U.S. involvement in the conflict as well. After they have gathered their information, students should write a two-page synopsis about the issue and be prepared to read their reports in class. Conclude by discussing the problem and speculating on its outcome.

LATIN AMERICA

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. compare and contrast the United States and Latin America
2. examine U.S. relations with three Latin American countries and speculate on future relations
3. debate current U.S. military, political, and economic policies in Latin America

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- certification
- commonwealth status
- *contras*
- Cuban missile crisis
- drug cartels
- Free Trade Area of the Americas
- Helms-Burton Act
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
- Reagan Doctrine
- trade embargo

ACTIVITIES

1. Write the names of the following Latin American countries on one end of the board (*Mexico, Cuba, Haiti,* and *Colombia*) and *the United States* on the other end. Tell students they are going to brainstorm their impressions of each country. Begin with each Latin American country listed. Ask students to call out words or short phrases that come to mind when they think about each of these countries. List their responses. Now ask the students to compare these four Latin American countries with each other. Circle the similarities among them. Then, write down words or phrases that the students say come to mind when they think of the United States. After brainstorming for five to ten minutes, lead a discussion comparing the countries of Latin America with the United States. What similarities are there? Differences? Do the Latin American countries appear to be quite different from the United States? Point out inaccurate student responses in the lists and discuss why they were mentioned. Conclude by discussing why it is important for these two regions to cooperate politically and economically.

2. U.S. relations with many Latin American nations have at times been friendly and at other times strained. Much of the strain has come about because of historical events or present conditions. After students have read "Latin America" in *Current Issues,* distribute copies of **Student Handout 20—U.S.–Latin American Relations.** Give students adequate time to complete the handout; they should be able to answer the questions using information in *Current Issues* or other resources available to them. Then, after everyone has completed the handout, proceed through the questions. Many call for some opinion or speculation so there may not be "right" or "wrong" answers, but responses should be factually and historically accurate.

Item 4 under each section calls for speculation about how relations might be affected if conditions were different. The following information should help you lead the discussion of each of these speculative questions.

- Students will likely mention that if the U.S.-Mexican border were as open as the U.S. border with Canada, both the drug trafficking and illegal immigrant problems would be highly affected. Of course, opinions will vary about whether or not the changes would be good or bad for both countries.

- All students will likely note that U.S.-Cuban relations would improve dramatically if Castro abandoned communism in favor of free markets and open elections. But how would that affect the Cuban people? Would the country fall into economic chaos like Russia after it abandoned communism? Would Cuban Americans move back to Cuba? Would U.S. companies open shop in Cuba?
- Of course, legalizing the sale of drugs in the United States would immediately change U.S.-Colombian relations because fighting drug trafficking would no longer be a priority for either nation. Illegal drug money would dry up and drug cartels would lose power and influence. But what happens in Colombia when billions of dollars leave their economy? What effect does legalizing drugs have on the United States?

3. Organize classroom debates around questions of U.S. relations in Latin America. The following are some possible topics.

- The United States should lift the economic embargo against Cuba.
- Puerto Rico should become the fifty-first state.
- The United States should use military means to combat the Latin American drug trade.

Depending on available time, you will have to decide how many debates to hold. If time does not allow all students to participate in a debate, you might want to assign them to be judges, timekeepers, or moderators.

Alternate pro and con speakers, give each speaker a set length of time, and allow rebuttal arguments after all speakers have presented their arguments. When each debate is finished, ask the assigned judges and/or the class to choose which side they thought was most convincing and tell why.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on Latin America. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students speculate about the future of U.S.–Latin American relations. Ask them to write an essay on what they think relations will be like in 2050. Will the relationship improve or deteriorate? Will free trade expand to the entire Western Hemisphere, or will countries become more protectionist and nationalistic? Have students read their essays in class. Is the class optimistic or pessimistic about the future of U.S.–Latin American relations?

2. Many cities and counties in the United States have visible and thriving Hispanic communities. As people from Latin America came to the United States they brought much of their culture with them. In a class brainstorming session, ask students to determine all of the Latin American and Caribbean nations represented in their metropolitan area. Then, as an interview and research project, have pairs or larger groups of students select and interview immigrants from a particular country. They should find out why their subjects came to the United States, what they did back home, what their plans and dreams are, and so forth. Each group should then write a report based on their interviews and be prepared to read the papers in class.

THE MIDDLE EAST

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. compare and contrast proposals for peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict
2. discuss U.S. foreign policy toward Iraq and Iran, using historical research

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Camp David Accords
- Gaza Strip
- Holocaust
- *intifada*
- Oslo Accords
- Palestinian Authority
- Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)
- UN Resolutions 242 and 338
- West Bank
- Wye River Accords
- Zionism

ACTIVITIES

1. Tell the class that they are a group of Middle East experts employed by the U.S. Department of State. The administration has decided that the United States must keep pressure on all sides to bring peace to the region. Divide students into groups of six with each person in the group representing one of the following interested parties: Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the PLO, Palestinians who reject PLO leadership, and the United States.

Students should use *Current Issues* and other sources to first complete **Student Handout 21—Middle East Peace Proposals.** To represent accurately the views of the various nations and interest groups, students will need time and access to a range of resources on the topic. After students have gathered sufficient information to represent their nation or interest group adequately, each group should meet to come up with a peace plan that it thinks is fair to all parties and has some hope of being accepted by the major players. Because it is unlikely that everyone will agree, the students will need to compromise and try to reduce the opposition to its plan. As part of its peace plan, each group must make recommendations for or against the following:

- The United States should support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

The UN resolutions might be a good starting point for group meetings. A careful analysis of each group's response to those resolutions may serve to lay the foundation for their peace plan. Because of the constantly changing positions of the interested parties, it is critical that students examine not only background information, but current resources as well. Suggest available resources and ask students where they think they might find them. When each group has what it believes is an acceptable plan for bringing peace to the region, it should present its plan to the rest of the class.

Conclude by discussing the problems and proposals of each group. Discuss the problems for U.S. policymakers presented by the situation in the Middle East.

2. Tell students that they are going to conduct historical research about Iraq and U.S.-Iraqi relations, and then develop a recommendation to the Clinton administration. Divide students into groups of four. Each group should divide research tasks as it develops its policy recommendation. Each student in the group should find information and prepare a briefing sheet for other group members about one of the following topics:

- the history of Iraq between World War I and 1978
- the seizure of power by Saddam Hussein and the Iran-Iraq War
- the Persian Gulf War
- Iraqi actions since the Persian Gulf War

Students can use available information from "The Middle East" in *Current Issues,* as well as from outside sources. Emphasize that their research does not have to be extensive, but that it should be sufficient to allow them to make an informed policy recommendation to the president.

After group members have completed their research and prepared their briefing sheets, groups should get together to draw up their recommendations. They may decide to lift the economic embargo against Iraq, to tighten the embargo to put more pressure on Saddam Hussein, to ask for a meeting with Saddam Hussein to negotiate an agreement, to use military force to oust Saddam Hussein, or to keep the status quo. After groups have finished, ask one member from each group to present his or her group's recommendation to the class. Urge class members to ask questions of the presenter, to find out how and why his or her group arrived at its recommendation.

3. Repeat activity 2 above using Iran as the focus of the research and report. Groups should consider the following topics:

- the modernization of Iran under Shah Reza Pahlavi
- the overthrow of the shah and establishment of fundamentalist government under the Ayatollah Khomeini
- the seizure of American hostages in the U.S. embassy in Teheran
- Iranian actions since the release of the U.S. hostages

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Use the following activities to enrich your unit on the Middle East. You may find the activities valuable for evaluation, extra credit, or as an additional assignment for the unit.

1. Have students cite specific examples of how each of the following factors has contributed to a lack of peace in the Middle East:

- religion
- national identity
- revenge
- paranoia
- interference from outside nations
- racism
- oil resources
- terrorism

Ask students to select two of their examples and hypothesize ways that peace might be achieved if those factors could either be limited or used to an advantage. Does it seem realistic that peace will be achieved in the Middle East?

2. Many of the problems of the Middle East, as well as its rich culture, are derived from its diversity. Have interested students make a wall chart of Middle Eastern countries and the ethnic groups that live in them. The chart should include information on religion, language, form of government, resources, per capita income, life span, and birthrates by nationality and ethnic groups. When the chart is complete, ask students how the information they have gathered helps to explain the continuing conflict in the region.

UNIT TEST MATERIALS

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UNIT TEST

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The Department of Veterans Affairs is the newest Cabinet department.

____ 2. The 106th Congress was controlled by the Democratic Party.

____ 3. Democrats and Republicans generally agree on which federal programs should be expanded and which should be cut.

____ 4. One of the conflicts between the legislative and executive branches in recent years has been over what to do with the budget surplus.

____ 5. Congress and President Clinton finally passed a balanced budget agreement in 1997.

____ 6. The costs of running for Congress have gone up dramatically in recent campaigns.

____ 7. Supreme Court justices are appointed by the president with the approval of the Senate and serve for life.

____ 8. President Reagan had a great effect on the present Supreme Court, having appointed three associate justices and the chief justice.

____ 9. A recent Supreme Court decision held that HIV-positive people are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

____ 10. The 105th Congress passed a far-reaching law regarding campaign finance reform.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. Cabinet

12. divided government

13. political action committee (PAC)

14. independent counsel

15. soft money

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Identify three members of the president's Cabinet and briefly describe those members' responsibilities.

17. President Clinton was impeached by the House of Representatives but was not removed from office. Why?

18. Explain the duties of the Supreme Court and why it is so important to the lives of the American people.

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UNIT TEST

THE FEDERAL BUDGET

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. A budget deficit occurs when spending exceeds revenue.

____ 2. A budget deficit can be lowered by either raising spending or lowering taxes, or a combination of both.

____ 3. Fiscal year 1998 was the first since 1969 that the federal government took in more money than it spent.

____ 4. The national debt is now more than $5 trillion.

____ 5. The budget deficit in fiscal year 1992 was the highest in history.

____ 6. Defense spending is the highest of the four main budget categories.

____ 7. The federal government shut down for two different periods of time in late 1995.

____ 8. An amendment to balance the budget was passed by Congress in 1997 and will be added to the Constitution as soon as the required number of states approve it.

____ 9. Under Social Security, today's employees are paying the retirement benefits for today's retirees.

____ 10. President Clinton favors using most of the budget surplus to give Americans a tax cut.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. mandatory spending

12. national debt

13. discretionary spending

14. generational responsibility

15. "corporate welfare"

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.
    a. The budget surplus should be used to reduce the national debt.
    b. "Corporate welfare" should be eliminated.
    c. Social Security should be privatized.

17. Explain why most experts think that Social Security will dry up by the early twenty-first century if reforms are not made.

18. List and explain two reasons experts give for the federal government now running a budget surplus when deficits were so common just a few years ago.

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CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The Bill of Rights was part of the original Constitution.

____ 2. It is the responsibility of the U.S. Supreme Court to interpret if and how the Bill of Rights and the Constitution apply to certain situations.

____ 3. Two states challenged the Handgun Control Act as unconstitutional, saying it violated the rights guaranteed by the Ninth Amendment.

____ 4. One of the most significant features of the Fourteenth Amendment is that it extends the Bill of Rights to cover state and local governments as well as the national government.

____ 5. The courts have ruled that a citizen's right to free expression is unlimited.

____ 6. The Second Amendment allows Americans to own any type of firearm.

____ 7. The Communications Decency Act, which outlaws the transmission of sexually explicit materials to minors over the Internet, was found unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

____ 8. In *Roe v. Wade,* the Supreme Court ruled that a woman has a constitutional right to an abortion.

____ 9. The Supreme Court has ruled that, because the word "privacy" does not exist in the Constitution, Americans do not have such a right.

____ 10. Doctor-assisted suicide is now legal in more than forty states.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. electronic privacy

12. federalism

13. undue burden

14. assisted suicide

15. unenumerated rights

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. Abortion should remain legal.

    b. The federal government should regulate the Internet to protect users' privacy.

    c. Doctor-assisted suicide should be allowed.

17. List and briefly describe three amendments that protect persons accused of a crime.

18. Discuss the relationship of the Bill of Rights to the concept of democratic rule of the majority, and give examples of tension between majority rule and minority rights.

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UNIT TEST

CRIME AND DRUGS

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. In the first half of 1998, the violent crime rate in the United States dropped 7 percent below the previous year.

____ 2. According to opinion polls, crime is one of the nation's top concerns.

____ 3. Despite the drop in overall violent crime in 1997, the murder rate has stayed about the same.

____ 4. The United States has about 2 million men and women in jails and prisons.

____ 5. Although the Brady bill has passed the Senate several times, it has not been passed by the House of Representatives.

____ 6. Most recent congressional crime bills have emphasized punishment over prevention.

____ 7. Most federal drug programs spend more money fighting the demand for drugs rather than the supply.

____ 8. A 1997 survey showed an increase in drug use by 12- to 17-year-old Americans.

____ 9. More than 13 million crimes are committed annually in the United States.

____ 10. Americans own more than 200 million firearms.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. Brady gun control law

12. mandatory sentencing

13. "broken windows" policy

14. Second Amendment

15. Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. Gun control laws reduce violent crime.

    b. Drug convictions should carry mandatory jail sentences.

    c. Under certain circumstances, juveniles should be tried as adults.

17. Explain why most experts believe there is a direct relationship between poverty and crime.

18. Imagine you are a member of Congress writing a bill to fight the rising drug use by teens. List and briefly explain three items you would include in your bill.

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UNIT TEST

THE ECONOMY

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. President Reagan's economic plan included decreasing the amount of taxes paid by Americans.

____ 2. Many American firms have moved their factories to other countries to take advantage of lower foreign labor costs.

____ 3. Although the economy grew substantially during most of the 1980s, the national debt soared.

____ 4. The Roosevelt administration fought the Great Depression of the 1930s by lowering taxes and interest rates.

____ 5. During recessions, the Federal Reserve Board often raises interest rates to lower inflation.

____ 6. During periods of high inflation, people are more inclined to save money.

____ 7. The U.S. economy was in recession during much of President Clinton's first term.

____ 8. The United States has one of the highest productivity rates in the world.

____ 9. By the end of 1998, the inflation rate remained high while the unemployment rate had dropped.

____ 10. Under a flat tax plan, wealthier people would pay a higher percentage of their income in taxes than low-income people.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. inflation

12. recession

13. antitrust laws

14. productivity

15. international interdependence

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The government should raise the minimum wage.

    b. The government should abandon the current tax system.

    c. The government should reform its antitrust laws.

17. Who is most likely to be hurt most by inflation? Select one and defend your choice.

    a. a retired couple living on their savings and Social Security

    b. a young couple who just bought a house

    c. a middle-aged couple who owns several apartments

    d. a recent college graduate starting to pay off a college loan

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UNIT TEST

EDUCATION

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Local property tax–based funding for education often results in equal educational opportunities between low-income and wealthy districts.

____ 2. The federal government was not significantly involved in education until the 1950s and 1960s.

____ 3. Early efforts to integrate schools often depended on court-ordered busing.

____ 4. Charter schools are private schools that depend on vouchers.

____ 5. The greatest share of funding for public schools comes from the national level of government.

____ 6. Some people believe that U.S. schools are becoming resegregated because many white Americans are moving to the suburbs.

____ 7. Project Head Start was one of President Johnson's Great Society programs.

____ 8. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were unconstitutional.

____ 9. The U.S. Supreme Court declared California's Proposition 227 unconstitutional.

____ 10. Supporters of vouchers think that they would give parents a greater choice of where their children go to school.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. busing

12. school desegregation

13. Proposition 227

14. magnet schools

15. school choice

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.
    a. Public schools should provide bilingual education.
    b. Parents should be given vouchers to pay for private schools.
    c. National teacher training should be reformed.

17. Explain the purpose of Head Start schools.

18. Explain why most communities support decentralized schools.

19. Identify three changes that you think would improve the quality of education in your school and explain how each would improve education.

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UNIT TEST

HEALTH CARE AND AGING

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Americans spend more on health care than do people in any other country.

____ 2. Some experts say Americans will spend nearly $1.5 trillion on health care by 2000.

____ 3. Medicaid is a joint federal-state program to help older Americans pay for health care.

____ 4. About 43 million Americans have no health insurance.

____ 5. Even people who are covered by private insurance sometimes go without medical treatment because they cannot afford to pay the deductible.

____ 6. Since the early 1980s, more than 1 million Americans have died from AIDS.

____ 7. Government-financed health care was a key part of President Johnson's Great Society program.

____ 8. Health care costs will go down as the baby boomers begin to retire.

____ 9. Medicare pays all the medical expenses of older Americans.

____ 10. The development of new medical technologies is reducing the cost of medical care.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. baby-boom generation

12. Food and Drug Administration

13. managed care

14. deductible

15. "near elderly"

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. List and describe three reasons why health care costs are rapidly rising.

17. Write a paragraph either supporting or opposing the speeding up of drug approval by the FDA.

18. Write a one-page essay either agreeing or disagreeing with the following statement: "Older Americans should pay more for Medicare."

19. Write a one-page essay either agreeing or disagreeing with the following statement: "Congress should pass a patient's bill of rights."

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UNIT TEST

IMMIGRATION

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. California voters turned down Proposition 187, which would have denied some state services to illegal immigrants.

____ 2. The Japanese Exclusion Act marked the first time that the United States closed its doors to a particular group of immigrants.

____ 3. The 1965 Immigration Act created a serious illegal immigration problem.

____ 4. Quotas have generally favored immigrants from cultures already heavily represented in the United States.

____ 5. The strength of the U.S. economy has been a major force in attracting immigrants to the United States.

____ 6. The Refugee Act of 1980 allows someone fleeing economic hardship to be admitted to the United States.

____ 7. One argument against illegal immigrants is that they take jobs away from qualified U.S. citizens.

____ 8. The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act gave illegal residents the opportunity to become legal citizens.

____ 9. The 1996 Immigration Act doubled the size of the Border Patrol force.

____ 10. The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 was designed to restrict the flow of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. quotas

12. official language

13. employment-based visa

14. refugee

15. assimilation

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The government should increase the number of work visas for highly skilled immigrants.

    b. The government should adopt English as its official language.

    c. The government should deny social services to illegal immigrants.

17. Restrictive legislation has often been motivated by prejudice. Describe one such example.

18. Why did many native-born Americans favor immigration quotas in 1900?

19. Present one argument in support of and one argument against the premise that immigrants take jobs away from U.S. citizens.

UNIT TEST

THE MEDIA

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answers in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

____ 2. John Peter Zenger was found innocent by a jury that thought that the government had violated his right to freedom of expression given to him by the U.S. Constitution.

____ 3. U.S. newspapers are required by law to be neutral and nonpartisan in their reporting about the government or government officials.

____ 4. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that *The New York Times* could print the Pentagon Papers.

____ 5. After the Kennedy/Nixon presidential debate, most people who had watched it on television thought that Kennedy had come out ahead.

____ 6. Today, about 40 million people around the world get news from the Internet.

____ 7. Tabloid journalism has increased the public confidence and trust toward the news media.

____ 8. Americans seem to disapprove of sensational journalism because television programs, Web sites, and newspapers that report in such a way have few followers.

____ 9. The Supreme Court has ruled that student newspapers do not enjoy the same freedom of the press as professional newspapers.

____ 10. Many people believe that televised reports from the Vietnam War lengthened the war and delayed the U.S. pullout.

Definition: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. the Internet

12. sedition laws

13. “new media”

14. sound bite

15. Pentagon Papers

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with each of the following.

    a. The "new media" have helped citizens become more informed.

    b. Journalistic ethics are declining.

    c. Television stations should give free airtime to political candidates.

17. What do you think the press could do to improve its image with the public?

18. Write a short essay explaining one benefit of the Internet. Then, write another short essay explaining one problem with the Internet.

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UNIT TEST

POVERTY

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. In recent years, government spending for social programs has been cut.

____ 2. President Roosevelt's New Deal gave jobs and money to unemployed, low-income, and older Americans.

____ 3. Medicare and Medicaid were parts of the New Deal.

____ 4. Children make up about 40 percent of the nation's poor.

____ 5. In 1996, Congress passed a welfare reform bill that gives block grants to states to spend on their own welfare programs.

____ 6. Medicare provides lower-income individuals with free or subsidized medical care.

____ 7. An unemployed person benefits greatly from the earned income tax credit.

____ 8. The federal AFDC program has been eliminated.

____ 9. In 1997, about 13 percent of the U.S. population lived in poverty.

____ 10. Many people objected to the 1996 welfare reform law because it did away with the federal guarantee of financial assistance to every needy family.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. poverty level

12. Great Society

13. Medicaid

14. earned income tax credit

15. Section 8

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. State-based welfare is succeeding.

    b. The government should expand the earned income tax credit.

    c. The government should increase funding for public-housing.

17. What were the arguments used by members of Congress and others who wanted to eliminate the AFDC?

18. Which groups are most likely to be living below the poverty level?

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UNIT TEST

WOMEN AND MINORITIES

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. "Jim Crow" laws were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court as early as 1896.

____ 2. The U.S. armed forces have been integrated since the Civil War.

____ 3. The Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* that maintaining separate schools for black and white students is unconstitutional.

____ 4. The poll tax was not barred until passage of the Twenty-fourth Amendment.

____ 5. Discrimination in programs receiving federal aid was declared unconstitutional in 1964.

____ 6. Federal law extends civil rights protections to people based on sexual orientation.

____ 7. Women earned the right to vote when the Fifteenth Amendment was passed shortly after the Civil War.

____ 8. Federal law requires that men and women be paid equally for equal work.

____ 9. In 1982, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) guaranteeing equal rights for women was added to the Constitution.

____ 10. Homosexuals are a protected class under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. Proposition 209

12. affirmative action

13. hate crimes

14. Civil Rights Act of 1964

15. reverse discrimination

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with each of the following.

    a. Affirmative action should be abolished.

    b. Special penalties should be applied to persons convicted of hate crimes.

    c. Employment nondiscrimination laws should protect homosexuals.

17. Write an essay agreeing or disagreeing with the following statement: "The history of the United States has been one of gradual expansion of both the meaning of civil rights and the groups to which they are extended."

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UNIT TEST

DEFENSE

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. During the 1980s, the U.S. government cut defense spending because President Reagan believed the Soviet Union was no longer a threat.

____ 2. For many years after World War II, U.S. military forces trained to fight one potential enemy—the Soviet Union.

____ 3. At present, the United States has about 1.4 million men and women in the armed forces.

____ 4. Three former communist nations are now members of NATO.

____ 5. The United States now has about 300,000 troops in Europe.

____ 6. The War Powers Act was passed by Congress in response to the invasion of Grenada by President Ronald Reagan.

____ 7. Only Congress can declare war.

____ 8. The United States is committed by treaty to defending allies around the world.

____ 9. During the Cold War years of the 1950s and 1960s, the United States often used military force to support pro-American governments threatened by communist forces.

____ 10. U.S. troops were sent to Bosnia in 1995 to keep a friendly government in power there.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. nuclear deterrence

12. NATO

13. national missile defense system

14. peace engagement

15. War Powers Act

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with each of the following.

    a. The United States should increase defense spending.

    b. The two-war strategy is obsolete.

    c. U.S. armed forces should participate in peacekeeping missions.

17. "The War Powers Act is an unconstitutional infringement on the power of the presidency." Write a paragraph explaining your opinion on this statement. Support your argument with facts.

18. Discuss ways in which the United States helps defend its allies around the world.

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UNIT TEST

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The United States is the oldest continuous democracy in the modern world.

____ 2. A great deal of decolonization took place after World War II because maintaining and administering colonies was expensive for the colonial powers.

____ 3. There are about twenty-five more democracies in the world today than there were in the 1970s.

____ 4. U.S. foreign policy has generally focused on promoting democracy around the world.

____ 5. President Clinton sent U.S. troops to Bosnia to remove an undemocratic dictator from power.

____ 6. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was passed by the U.S. Congress after World War II to urge governments around the world to grant human rights to their citizens.

____ 7. Human rights have become much more important as a foreign policy issue because of global communications and increased international trade.

____ 8. China and the United States have agreed that the United States will no longer link trade and human rights in its relations with China.

____ 9. The United States has been a staunch proponent of establishing a permanent International Criminal Court.

____ 10. Many of the countries in Latin America still do not have democratically elected governments.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. International Religious Freedom Act

12. self-determination

13. war crimes

14. national interest

15. genocide

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with each of the following.

    a. U.S. foreign policy should focus on protecting human rights.

    b. The United States should support a permanent international court to try human rights violators.

    c. The United States should economically punish nations that do not practice religious tolerance.

17. List and explain at least two historic events that have led to today's unprecedented number of democracies around the world.

18. Name and briefly discuss two occasions on which U.S. troops were sent to foreign countries to build democracy.

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UNIT TEST

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The greenhouse effect could melt polar ice caps and raise the level of oceans enough to flood many coastal U.S. cities.

____ 2. Changes in the average global temperatures of a few degrees have little effect on Earth's weather.

____ 3. Acid rain is primarily a U.S. problem.

____ 4. The United States now has a permanent underground repository for nuclear waste.

____ 5. Nuclear waste can be dangerous for thousands of years.

____ 6. A hole in the ozone layer exists over Siberia in Russia.

____ 7. The World Conservation Union says that one in eight of Earth's plants face extinction.

____ 8. The Montreal Protocol addressed the issue of banning the use of CFCs.

____ 9. The cost of pollution control is high, but so is the cost of allowing pollution to continue.

____ 10. Earth Summit II found that environmental practices around the world have dramatically improved since the first Earth Summit.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. Earth Summit

12. ozone layer

13. greenhouse effect

14. megadiverse country

15. acid rain

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with each of the following.

    a. The United States should ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

    b. World nations should build more nuclear power plants.

    c. Congress should reauthorize the Endangered Species Act.

17. Explain why the governments of the United States and Mexico would likely disagree about the terms of the Kyoto Protocol.

18. "Many issues are not national but international." Support this statement by describing the international nature of one type of pollution.

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UNIT TEST

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Tariffs discourage the purchase of domestic products.

____ 2. The floating exchange system for currency was developed at Bretton Woods in 1944.

____ 3. Experts believe that NAFTA will help reduce the U.S. trade deficit with Japan.

____ 4. The trade wars of the 1930s deepened the effects of the Great Depression.

____ 5. The trade deficit is blamed for the loss of thousands of U.S. jobs to foreign workers every year.

____ 6. The U.S. trade deficit with Japan has gradually been reduced in recent years.

____ 7. A country's climate may give it a comparative advantage.

____ 8. Protectionism may result in a trade war.

____ 9. GATT is an international organization established to set a code of conduct for nations that trade.

____ 10. China has recently been critical of the World Trade Organization and wants to give up its membership.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. free trade

12. European Union

13. protectionism

14. fast track

15. trade deficit

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Identify two trade barriers and explain how they would restrict trade.

17. What kinds of jobs are most likely to be lost by Americans to foreign countries under free-trade agreements such as NAFTA and GATT? Explain your answer.

18. Write one argument for and one argument against a plan whereby the federal government would give money to private U.S. companies for research and development.

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UNIT TEST

WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The world's largest arms dealers are the oil-rich nations of the Middle East and Asia.

____ 2. The United States and other nuclear powers have agreed to transfer nuclear technology for electricity production and medical research.

____ 3. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has the power to inspect nuclear facilities and enforce UN nonproliferation treaties.

____ 4. World leaders are worried that nuclear materials from the former Soviet Union could fall into the hands of terrorists or unfriendly governments.

____ 5. Although many countries have signed pledges not to acquire nuclear weapons, others have refused to make such promises.

____ 6. Nuclear reactors can be used to develop weapons.

____ 7. Many experts believe that the spread of nuclear weapons has increased over the past twenty-five years.

____ 8. In 1996, more than fifty UN members signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

____ 9. Proponents of a national missile defense system fear attack by Russia and its allies.

____ 10. The development and manufacture of sophisticated military hardware account for hundreds of thousands of jobs in the United States.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. nuclear technology

12. Baruch Plan

13. START II

14. conventional weapons

15. nuclear club

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should develop a missile defense system.

    b. The United States should limit its sales of conventional weapons.

    c. The United States should stop selling nuclear materials and technology.

17. Explain why some people have called chemical weapons the "poor man's atomic bomb."

18. Choose one treaty or agreement you have read about in "Weapons Proliferation." Which nations were involved? What were the terms of the treaty? Was the agreement successful? Why or why not?

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UNIT TEST

WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. More than 1 billion people now live in poverty, many suffer from hunger and disease.

____ 2. Two-thirds of the world's impoverished people are younger than age 15.

____ 3. Experts predict that the world's population will surpass 9 billion by 2050.

____ 4. One reason that the United States provides foreign aid is to open up future markets for American products.

____ 5. Sales of American military equipment to friendly nations have increased as a result of U.S. aid to those nations.

____ 6. The United States commits about 10 percent of its annual budget to foreign aid.

____ 7. Most U.S. aid goes to areas in Africa that are unable to grow enough food.

____ 8. The highest population growth rates tend to be in the least developed nations.

____ 9. Most of the world's most impoverished countries are in the Northern Hemisphere.

____ 10. The United States distributes its foreign aid through a federal agency called the International Monetary Fund.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. North-South conflict

12. multilateral aid

13. bilateral aid

14. developing countries

15. national interest

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should continue to give foreign aid because it is in the U.S. national interest.

    b. The United States should give more money to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

    c. The United States should promote family planning in less developed coutries to slow population growth.

17. Identify three reasons why the United States has historically given foreign aid.

18. Explain the difference between humanitarian assistance and security assistance.

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EAST ASIA

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Japan rebuilt its postwar industries with the help of American aid.

____ 2. The U.S. trade deficit with Japan has increased since the early 1980s.

____ 3. The United States and Japan agreed to a security arrangement in 1952.

____ 4. Trade is essential to the economy of Japan.

____ 5. In recent years, Japan has had the fastest-growing economy in East Asia.

____ 6. U.S.-China relations are sometimes strained because of human rights issues.

____ 7. The United States now carries on more trade with China than it does with Japan.

____ 8. China has abandoned its communist government in favor of capitalism.

____ 9. In 1999, NATO forces accidentally bombed the Chinese embassy in Kosovo.

____ 10. In recent years, North Korea's economy has deteriorated.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. "Asian flu"

12. "one China"

13. MFN trade status

14. Mutual Security Treaty

15. demilitarized zone

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. From the perspective of a leading consumer advocate, write a letter to your member of Congress about U.S.-Japanese trade policies.

17. From the perspective of an unemployed autoworker, write a letter to your member of Congress about U.S.-Japanese trade policies.

18. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should withdraw its troops from Japan.

    b. The United States should end foreign aid to North Korea.

    c. The United States should grant permanent MFN trade status to China.

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UNIT TEST

EUROPE AND RUSSIA

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. One goal of Soviet foreign policy after World War II was to establish a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Germany.

____ 2. Members of the EC signed the Maastrict Treaty in 1992, and the European Union went into effect in 1993.

____ 3. During the Cold War, Germany was divided into two separate countries, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic.

____ 4. NATO was originally formed to fight Nazi Germany during World War II.

____ 5. *Détente* refers to the easing of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1970s.

____ 6. Mikhail Gorbachev named Boris Yeltin the president of Russia after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

____ 7. Ethnic Albanians in Kosovo were forced into refugee camps by Serbian troops and paramilitaries.

____ 8. Croatia, the largest and most powerful of the former Yugoslav republics, tried to subdue its Muslim neighbors in Bosnia.

____ 9. Several eastern European countries are now members of NATO.

____ 10. Under the Dayton peace plan, Bosnia was divided into two ethnic zones.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. the euro

12. Marshall Plan

13. European Union (EU)

14. economic "shock therapy"

15. ethnic cleansing

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Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should be militarily involved in the Balkans.

    b. The United States should change its policy toward Russia.

    c. NATO should expand its military reach.

17. Describe two major changes in Europe as a result of the fall of communism.

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UNIT TEST

LATIN AMERICA

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. Haitian president Aristide was returned to power after U.S. forces occupied Haiti.

____ 2. Mexico, like many other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, has been politically unstable.

____ 3. Mexico is the United States' third-largest trading partner after Canada and Japan.

____ 4. Cuba's communist revolution had little effect on other Latin American countries.

____ 5. Present U.S. policy toward Latin America emphasizes the containment of communism.

____ 6. In 1997, Mexico went into default when it could not repay its huge loan from the IMF.

____ 7. In 1996, right-wing candidate Arnoldo Aleman defeated the Sandinista candidate, Daniel Ortega, in presidential elections in Nicaragua.

____ 8. In recent years, Brazil has had the fastest growing and most successful economy in South America.

____ 9. Chile may become the newest member of NAFTA.

____ 10. Opponents of the North American Free Trade Agreement said that the agreement would harm U.S. workers because many manufacturing jobs would move to Mexico.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. commonwealth status (Puerto Rico)

12. trade embargo

13. Reagan Doctrine

14. North American Free Trade Agreement

15. drug cartels

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and "one" con argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should lift the economic embargo against Cuba.

    b. Puerto Rico should become the fifty-first state.

    c. The United States should use military means to combat the Latin American drug trade.

17. Describe two major economic problems that seem to affect many Latin American countries.

18. Describe the purpose of the Helms-Burton Act and tell why U.S. trading partners were opposed to it.

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THE MIDDLE EAST

True/False: Use T for true and F for false, and place your answer in the blank. Use the space below the item to correct any statements you think are false.

____ 1. The modern history of the Middle East has been dominated by conflict between Arabs and Israelis.

____ 2. In 1947, the United Nations proposed that two states, one Arab and one Jewish, be created in Palestine.

____ 3. The United States at first refused to recognize the new nation of Israel.

____ 4. Egypt's President Nasser successfully unified all Arab nations into the United Arab Republic.

____ 5. Israel is the most populous country in the Middle East.

____ 6. Khomeini "Westernized" Iran after seizing the government from the shah in 1979.

____ 7. The September 1993 peace agreement between the PLO and Israel included a provision by Israel to create a Palestinian homeland.

____ 8. Yassir Arafat is the president of the Palestinian Authority (PA).

____ 9. Israel occupies the West Bank but only Palestinians have been allowed to live there.

____ 10. The Persian Gulf War was caused by Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait.

Definitions: Using complete sentences, write a short definition for each of the following terms.

11. Zionism

12. Palestine Liberation Organization

13. Oslo Accords

14. *intifada*

15. Camp David Accords

Essay: Write a complete answer for each of the following.

16. Write one "pro" and one "con" argument for each of the following statements.

    a. The United States should use military force to oust Saddam Hussein.

    b. The United States should support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

    c. The United States should end economic sanctions against Iran.

17. Describe the causes of conflict in the Middle East from the perspectives of both a Palestinian and an Israeli.

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UNIT TEST ANSWERS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. T
2. F—Republicans controlled both houses of the 106th Congress.
3. F—They often disagree.
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. T
8. T
9. T
10. F—The 105th Congress did not pass a campaign finance reform law.
11. The Cabinet is made up of the secretaries of thirteen executive departments and the attorney general, along with the heads of other key administrative agencies. All are appointed by the president and can be fired by the president.
12. There is divided government when the executive and legislative branches are controlled by different parties.
13. PACs are tools through which special interest groups raise and contribute money to political campaigns.
14. The U.S. attorney general can appoint an independent counsel to investigate potential wrongdoing or conflict of interest in the executive branch.
15. "Soft money" refers to campaign contributions that are made to the party rather than to individual candidates.
16. Students can pick any three Cabinet members. Refer to "The Clinton Administration" as a guide.
17. The Senate failed to gain the two-thirds majority vote necessary to remove the president from office.
18. Answers may vary, but students should explain that the Court interprets laws and the Constitution. Its decisions are important because they can limit or expand the power of the federal government.

THE FEDERAL BUDGET

1. T
2. F—A deficit can be lowered by reducing spending, raising taxes, or a combination of the two.
3. T
4. T
5. T
6. F—Mandatory, or entitlement, spending is the highest of the categories.
7. T
8. F—Congress has not yet passed a balanced budget amendment.
9. T
10. F—President Clinton wants to use the surplus to "rescue" Social Security and Medicare and give increased funding to several other programs.
11. Mandatory, or entitlement, spending covers programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Anyone who qualifies is entitled to receive benefits.
12. The national debt is the sum of all deficits the U.S. government has accumulated over the years.
13. Discretionary spending pays for all the programs in the budget whose funding is adjusted by the president and Congress every year. It does not include defense spending.
14. Some Americans say that today's elected officials have a responsibility to control and reduce the national debt so it does not become a burden for the next generation.

15. "Corporate welfare" refers to tax breaks and other financial considerations given to private U.S. companies by the federal government.

16. Students must present both a pro and a con argument for all three statements. Answers will vary. Teacher judgment is important to determine if answers are based on fact or are merely opinion. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. Many experts believe that Social Security will dry up in future years because the number of retirees is increasing faster than the number of younger workers who are paying into the system. Americans are living longer and millions of "baby boomers" will begin to retire in 2008.

18. Two common reasons given for the surplus are the booming U.S. economy, which is producing greater tax revenues than expected, and the spending cuts agreed to by Congress and the president.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

1. F—It was added by the first Congress in 1789 and ratified in 1791 as the first ten amendments.

2. T

3. F—The Handgun Control Act was challenged in Court under rights granted by the Tenth Amendment.

4. T

5. F—The courts have ruled that certain types of speech and writing can be limited.

6. F—Federal laws passed by Congress restrict some kinds of weapons, such as sawed-off shotguns and fully automatic machine guns and rifles.

7. T

8. T

9. F—The Court has ruled that Americans do have the right to privacy under the Constitution.

10. F—More than forty states have passed legislation prohibiting doctor-assisted suicide.

11. Electronic privacy refers to fears by Internet and other phone users that the information disseminated is not being kept private and confidential and could be used to harm them in some way.

12. Under the U.S. system of federalism, the states and the federal government share power in a system outlined by the Constitution.

13. "Undue burden" is a term used by the Supreme Court to refer to any action by the state that makes it almost impossible for a woman to get an abortion.

14. Some states have considered allowing doctors to help terminally ill people commit suicide.

15. Unenumerated rights are rights not specifically mentioned in the Constitution.

16. Students must present both a pro and a con argument for all three statements. Their answers must be factual, and the teacher's judgment is important. Refer to "The Debate" for likely responses.

17. The Fourth Amendment protects against unreasonable searches and seizures; the Fifth Amendment protects suspects from self-incrimination; the Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to a speedy trial with a jury, the right to an attorney, and the right to confront witnesses; and the Eighth Amendment forbids excessive bail and cruel and unusual punishment.

18. Answers will vary, but students should base their answers on the information presented and discussed in this chapter.

CRIME AND DRUGS

1. T

2. T

3. F—The murder rate fell 9 percent.

4. T

5. F—The Brady bill passed Congress in 1993 and became law as the Handgun Control Act in 1994.

6. T

7. F—Most federal drug programs spend more money fighting the supply of drugs.

8. T

9. T

10. T

11. The Brady gun control law, also known as the Handgun Control Act, called for a five-day waiting period for the purchase of a handgun.

12. Mandatory sentencing laws obligate judges to sentence criminals to at least a minimum term in prison.

13. A "broken windows" policy seeks to prosecute even small crimes—such as breaking windows—in an attempt to deter more serious crimes.

14. The Second Amendment refers to the right of the people or the militia to keep and bear arms. Its interpretation varies.

15. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 provided $30 billion over six years for crime control. The act added police officers, banned some assault weapons, and imposed some mandatory life sentences.

16. Students are asked to give both a pro and a con response to all three statements. Answers may vary, and teacher judgment is important. Refer to "The Debate" for likely responses.

17. Answers should include information in *Current Issues* explaining how poverty and crime are related.

18. Items should be supported by factual and accurate information presented in *Current Issues*, class activities, and discussions.

THE ECONOMY

1. T

2. T

3. T

4. F—Roosevelt fought the Great Depression by creating millions of public works jobs.

5. F—The Fed often lowers interest rates during recessions to stimulate the economy.

6. F—During periods of high inflation, people are less inclined to save money.

7. F—The economy grew during most of Clinton's first term.

8. T

9. F—Inflation was low and the unemployment rate had dropped.

10. F—Under a flat tax, people would pay taxes based on the same percentage.

11. Inflation is a continuing rise in prices for goods and services.

12. A recession is a time marked by increased unemployment and declines in production, spending, and consumer demand.

13. Many years ago, Congress passed antitrust laws to stop businesses from gaining a monopoly that would destroy competition.

14. "Productivity" refers to the amount of goods produced per person per hour.

15. "International interdependence" refers to the dependence of the American economy on the economies of other nations and the dependence of other economies on the U.S. economy.

16. Students are to give both a pro and a con response to each statement. Refer to "The Debate" section at the end of the chapter for possible answers. Students may include other valid responses; therefore, teacher judgment is important.

17. The correct response is a. (The retired couple will be hurt the most by inflation. While their costs go up, their fixed income does not. Others have a chance to increase their incomes.)

EDUCATION

1. F—Unequal education opportunities often result from local property tax–based funding.

2. T

3. T

4. F—Charter schools are usually small publicly funded schools established to cater to students with a particular interest or special need.

5. F—Local governments provide most of the funding for education.

6. T

7. T

8. T

9. F—The Supreme Court has not ruled on Proposition 227.

10. T

11. "Busing" refers to a court-ordered plan whereby school districts must transport students from neighborhood schools to other schools in the district to achieve racial integration.

12. Desegregation took place in U.S. schools after the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional for school districts to separate students by race.

13. Proposition 227 is an attempt by California to dismantle bilingual education by placing non-English speaking students in an intense one-year English immersion program and after that in mainstream classrooms.

14. Magnet schools offer specialized curricula designed to attract students from all over the district for the purpose of encouraging racial integration.

15. "School choice" refers to the practice of allowing parents in certain states or districts to choose the school they want their children to attend.

16. Students must provide one argument for and one argument against the three issues. Answers reflect student opinion, and teachers must use judgment when evaluating.

17. Head Start schools attempt to teach 3- and 4-year-olds basic concepts, such as prereading skills, that many believe will keep students in low-income areas from falling too far behind in elementary school. The goal is to help break the poverty cycle.

18. Decentralization allows parents a greater role in determining the kind of education they want for their children.

19. Answers will vary. Look for logical reforms that are supported by statements that indicate how each change would improve the quality of education. Students must identify three changes.

HEALTH CARE AND AGING

1. T

2. T

3. F—Medicaid helps low-income people pay for health care.

4. T

5. T

6. F—About 400,000 Americans have died from AIDS.

7. T

8. F—The large number of baby boomers will likely cause health care costs to go up.

9. F—Recipients have to pay the first $600 of a hospital stay and whatever extra amount doctors charge over the amount the government is willing to pay.

10. F—The new technologies are expensive, and the costs of equipment and services are passed on to patients and their insurers.

11. High birthrates from 1946 to the early 1960s caused a surge in the U.S. population, commonly called the baby boom.

12. The Food and Drug Administration is a federal agency that tests new drugs for safety and effectiveness.

13. Health insurance carriers commonly enroll their customers in managed care programs such as HMOs to hold down costs by limiting patients' access to more expensive specialists and hospitals.

14. The deductible is the amount of money patients must pay before their insurance coverage begins.

15. President Clinton has proposed allowing Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 to enroll in Medicare. This group is called "near elderly."

16. Students should give three answers. Possible answers include (1) the U.S. health care industry has steadily expanded its system to where people no longer pay their own bills (bills are being paid by insurance companies, Medicare, and so forth); (2) the development of expensive new technology has caused a rapid rise in costs; and (3) the rapidly aging population adds to the number of people with health problems.

17. Students should give both sides of the argument in their essays, based on information in the chapter—especially from "The Debate."

18. Teachers should use their judgment when evaluating these essays. Students should take a stance and then defend it with specific evidence.

19. Teachers should use their judgment when evaluating these essays. Students are asked to take a position and then support it with factual arguments.

IMMIGRATION

1. F—Proposition 187 was passed.

2. F—The law was the Chinese Exclusion Act.

3. T

4. T

5. T

6. F—The act allows entry to political refugees, not economic refugees.

7. T

8. T

9. T

10. F—The McCarran-Walter Act added ideology to the requirements for admission of immigrants to the United States. Officials were concerned about immigrants who were communists entering the country.

11. Early immigration laws placed quotas, or limits, on the numbers of nonnorthern and nonwestern Europeans who could come to the United States. Officials wanted to preserve the ethnic makeup of the country.

12. Some Americans think that English should be made the official language of the United States to encourage immigrants to learn English.

13. Foreigners who possess a special skill can apply for an employment-based visa to live and work in the United States.

14. A refugee is a person who flees another country for political or economic reasons.

15. "Assimilation" refers to the process of becoming like the majority population of a country.

16. Students must provide one answer for and one answer against the three issues. Answers reflect student opinion, and teachers must use judgment when evaluating. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. Students could give many examples from the list of legislation. Examples include the Chinese Exclusion Act and the "gentlemen's agreement," both of which excluded Asians because of American fears of Asians. The quota acts were also discriminatory, purposely based on census figures that did not accurately represent the ethnic makeup of the United States at the time the acts were passed.

18. Many native-born Americans were upset by the swing in immigration from northern and western Europe to immigration from southern and eastern Europe. They were unfamiliar with the cultural customs of the new immigrants and saw them as less desirable than immigrants who settled in the United States in the years prior to 1890.

19. Pro arguments could include (1) the U.S. economy cannot absorb more immigrants; and (2) immigrants increase the overall labor pool and many are willing to work for lower wages, thus driving down overall wages.

Con arguments could include (1) immigrants are important because many are willing to take jobs that many native-born Americans turn down; and (2) the 1990 immigration law will create new jobs for Americans because it encourages the admission of well-educated immigrants who can create new businesses that will hire American workers.

THE MEDIA

1. T
2. F—Zenger's trial occurred during the colonial period before there was a U.S. Constitution.
3. F—Newspapers can be partisan, and most are.
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. F—Tabloid journalism seems to have lessened public trust of the media.
8. F—Newspapers, Web sites, and television programs that run sensational stories are generally popular.
9. T
10. F—Many think it shortened the war and hastened the U.S. pullout.
11. The Internet is a network of computers that allows users to "talk" to each other and access information electronically.
12. The government passed sedition laws to stop Americans from publicly criticizing elected and other public officials.
13. "New media" refers to the latest media technology, such as the Internet, e-mail, cable television, and so forth.
14. A sound bite is a short excerpt from a statement (perhaps made by a political candidate) that makes its way onto a television newscast.
15. The Pentagon Papers were secret documents about the Vietnam War that were printed against the wishes of the Nixon administration by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post.*
16. Students are asked to either agree or disagree with all three statements. Answers may vary, and teacher judgment is important. Refer to "The Debate" for likely responses.
17. This question calls for student opinion, but answers should be based on factual and accurate information.
18. Answers may vary, but factual reasons should come out. Possible benefits include rapid communication, interaction with the sender, low cost, and so forth. Problems could include inaccurate and sensational news stories, transmission of pornography, and so forth.

POVERTY

1. T
2. T
3. F—They were parts of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society.
4. T
5. T
6. F—Medicaid, not Medicare, provides health care to lower-income individuals.
7. F—Only those workers who earn an income below the poverty level qualify for the earned income tax credit.

8. T

9. T

10. T

11. Americans who earn below a set annual dollar figure are considered to be living at or below the poverty level. In 1997, the level for a family of four was $16,400.

12. "The Great Society" was the name of President Johnson's domestic policy program. Among its initiatives were a major civil rights law, Medicare and Medicaid, and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

13. Medicaid provides free or subsidized medical care for low-income Americans. It is jointly funded by the federal and state governments.

14. An earned income tax credit is an income credit —similar to a rebate—from the federal government given to families who fall below the poverty level despite having jobs.

15. Section 8 refers to the federal program wherby the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development subsidizes rent for low-income tenants.

16. Answers will vary. Make sure that student statements are factual. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. Many who wanted to eliminate AFDC objected to the cash payment to recipients, which recipients could spend as they wanted. Critics said AFDC encouraged out-of-wedlock births and provided incentives for recipients to stay unemployed. Others believed the states could do a better job than the federal government in running welfare programs.

18. Elderly Americans, single mothers, children, and minorities are groups most likely to be living below the poverty level.

WOMEN AND MINORITIES

1. F—Some "Jim Crow" laws remained in effect into the 1960s.

2. F—The military was ordered to integrate by President Harry Truman in 1948.

3. T

4. T

5. F—Such discrimination was prohibited by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

6. F—Federal law does not extend civil rights protections based on sexual orientation, although some state and local laws may extend these rights.

7. F—Women won the right to vote by ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

8. T

9. F—The ERA failed to receive approval from the necessary thirty-eight states and was not added to the Constitution.

10. F—Homosexuals are not a protected class.

11. Proposition 209 was a California initiative that barred the state from discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, education, or contracting.

12. Affirmative action is a policy that requires employers to take positive steps to overcome the effects of past discrimination.

13. A hate crime is an illegal act committed against a person because of a bias against that individual's race, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation.

14. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public accommodations such as restaurants and hotels and in programs receiving federal aid.

15. People in a majority group may feel they are victims of reverse discrimination if they are passed over for a job or admittance to a school in favor of a minority candidate even though they have equal or better qualifications.

16. Students must either agree or disagree with each of the statements. Answers will vary. Teacher judgment is important to determine if answers

are based on fact or are merely opinion. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. Teachers should use their judgment when evaluating these essays. Students must take a stance and then defend it with specific evidence.

DEFENSE

1. F—Defense spending increased because President Reagan believed the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in military strength.

2. T

3. T

4. F—Russia and other eastern European countries are only "partners" in NATO—not NATO members.

5. F—The United States has about 100,000 troops in Europe.

6. F—The War Powers Act was passed during the Nixon administration in response to U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

7. T

8. T

9. T

10. F—The goal of the U.S. effort was to uphold a peace treaty ending Bosnia's civil war.

11. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union pursued a policy called nuclear deterrence whereby each side believed that if it kept its nuclear arsenal at the same strength as its enemy's, the enemy would not attack.

12. NATO—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—is a military alliance that includes the United States, Canada, most of western Europe, Greece, and Turkey.

13. Some U.S. officials want to develop and deploy a missile defense system that will shoot down enemy missiles headed for the United States.

14. In 1995, the Pentagon added a new strategy called peace engagement to support its increasing number of global peacekeeping operations.

15. The War Powers Act limits the president's use of U.S. troops by requiring the president to advise Congress before sending troops to a potential combat zone and limiting the time they can stay there without congressional authorization.

16. Students must either agree or disagree with each of the statements. Answers should be factual, and teacher judgment is important. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible answers.

17. The question calls for student opinion and critical thinking. Answers should be based on fact, and teacher judgment is important.

18. The United States defends its allies by placing troops and nuclear missiles on allied soil, giving allies money to keep their defense systems up to date, and joining alliances such as NATO.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. T

2. T

3. F—There are 117 democracies now, more than double the number of democracies in the 1970s.

4. T

5. F—Clinton sent U.S troops to Bosnia as part of a NATO peacekeeping force.

6. F—The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a United Nations document.

7. T

8. F—The two countries have not agreed on the linkage of human rights and trade.

9. F—The United States has been hesitant about establishing a permanent international criminal court.

10. F—Nearly all Latin American nations are now democracies.

11. The International Religious Freedom Act requires the administration to take action against nations that discriminate against their citizens because of their religion.

12. Self-determination is the belief that a country should have the ability to govern itself without outside control or interference.

13. When individuals commit grave offenses against the laws of warfare, those acts are known as war crimes. They are often crimes against humanity, such as murder, rape, and torture.

14. National interest is similar to an individual's self-interest. A nation, like a person, bases its actions on what will be to its benefit or advantage.

15. Tyrants may pursue a policy of genocide whereby they try to wipe out an entire ethnic or racial group in their region.

16. Students must either agree or disagree with each of the statements. Answers will vary. Teacher judgment is important to determine if answers are based on fact or are merely opinion. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. Students should refer to such events as the end of World War II and decolonization, the fall of the Iron Curtain, U.S. military efforts in several Latin American countries, political transformation in South Africa, and other events you may have discussed in class.

18. Answers should focus on U.S. efforts in Haiti and Bosnia.

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

1. T

2. F—Such changes have great impact.

3. F—Acid rain is an international problem.

4. F—No permanent repository yet exists.

5. T

6. F—The hole in the ozone layer is over Antarctica.

7. T

8. T

9. T

10. F—Earth Summit II found that environmental practices have not improved.

11. Representatives from many nations met in Brazil in 1992 to negotiate environmental agreements.

12. The ozone layer is a thin layer of gas that protects Earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

13. "Greenhouse effect" refers to the gradual rise in the temperature of Earth's atmosphere, caused by carbon dioxide trapping the sun's heat.

14. Countries with a wide array of plant and animal species are called megadiverse.

15. Acid rain is a highly acidic rainfall that causes damage to soil, plants, buildings, and bodies of water.

16. Answers will vary, but a good answer should contain a valid argument agreeing or disagreeing with each of the issues. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

17. The United States, as a developed country, thinks that developing countries such as Mexico should have to meet the same greenhouse gas emission standard that developed countries do under the Kyoto Protocol.

18. Answers will vary, but typical answers might include the following:
    - acid rain—This problem involves both Canada and the United States (and many nations in Europe).
    - stream and lake pollution—If the body of water crosses national borders, one nation alone cannot solve the problem if the other nation continues to pollute.

- the Chernobyl incident—Air pollutants were carried across many national borders.
- greenhouse effect/ozone layer—All nations need to consider how they add to these problems.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1. F—Tariffs discourage purchase of foreign products.
2. F—The floating exchange system was not developed until 1971.
3. F—NAFTA only affects trade between the United States, Canada, and Mexico.
4. T
5. T
6. F—The U.S. trade deficit with Japan has been steadily rising and reached an all-time high in 1998.
7. T
8. T
9. T
10. F—China is not a member of the WTO, but wants to be.
11. "Free trade" refers to trade without restrictions.
12. The European Union, made up of fifteen countries, replaced the European Community in 1993 as the organization seeking economic unification for the continent.
13. "Protectionism" refers to the erecting of barriers to free trade.
14. Fast track trade authority would allow the president to negotiate a trade treaty with another country; the Senate would either have to approve or disapprove the treaty in its entirety. The Senate could not change the terms of the treaty.
15. A trade deficit occurs when a nation buys more foreign products and services than it sells to other nations.
16. Quotas restrict imports to a specific number. Tariffs are taxes on imports that make foreign products more expensive than similar domestic products.
17. Low-skilled jobs are most likely to be lost because U.S. companies will move factories that employ such workers to countries where workers will command less money.
18. Pro arguments would stress that helping companies with research and development funds promotes economic development and helps them compete with foreign businesses. Con arguments would point to unfairness to U.S. companies not getting government money. Some would also say such actions are a waste of taxpayer money.

WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

1. F—The five members of the UN Security Council are the world's top arms exporters.
2. T
3. F—The International Atomic Energy Agency has the power to inspect nuclear facilities but does not have the power to enforce treaties.
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. F—Many experts believe that the spread of nuclear weapons has slowed over the past twenty-five years.
8. T
9. F—Proponents of a missile defense system fear attack by nations like China, North Korea, and Iraq.
10. T

11. "Nuclear technology" refers to developments in weaponry, energy, and medicine using atomic energy.

12. The Baruch Plan called for destruction of all nuclear weapons when only the United States had them. It was rejected by the Soviet Union.

13. START II is a treaty between the United States and Russia in which both sides agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals by more than one-third.

14. Conventional weapons are nonnuclear weapons such as tanks, aircraft, and missiles.

15. "Nuclear club" refers to the group of nations that currently have nuclear weapon capabilities.

16. Students must provide one answer for and one answer against the three issues. Answers should reflect student opinion or factual information from the reading, and teachers must use judgment when evaluating.

17. Chemical weapons can be made cheaply, are hard to detect, can be used without warning, and can be very destructive.

18. Student responses should correspond to one treaty or agreement they have read about in the "Weapons Proliferation" chapter.

WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

1. T

2. T

3. T

4. T

5. T

6. F—The United States commits less than 1 percent of its annual budget to foreign aid.

7. F—Most aid goes to the Middle East and Latin America.

8. T

9. F—Most developing countries are near or south of the equator.

10. F—The United States distributes most foreign aid through the U.S. Agency for International Development and several other multilateral organizations. IMF loans have to be paid back by the recipient nations.

11. Some experts define the pattern of world poverty in terms of North and South because most poor nations are located near or below the equator and most developed countries are north of the equator.

12. The United States gives money to international aid organizations that then distribute these funds to needy countries as multilateral aid.

13. Bilateral aid goes directly from one country to another country.

14. Sometimes called Third World countries, developing countries have little industry and struggle to provide for the needs of their people.

15. An action that helps a country gain military or economic advantage is said to be in the national interest of that country.

16. Students are asked to give both a pro and a con response to each of the three statements. Answers will vary but should be factual. Teacher judgment is important. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for likely responses.

17. The United States gives aid to (1) maintain a strong alliance system around the world; (2) raise the standard of living in other countries, often enabling the recipients to buy more American products; (3) promote political stability in a region by providing governments with military equipment and funds for economic development; and (4) for humanitarian reasons.

18. Development and humanitarian assistance help developing nations build roads, power plants, schools, and hospitals, and provide food for the hungry. Security assistance is used to strengthen the armed forces and economies of friendly

governments, enabling such governments to buy American-made weapons, airplanes, and military vehicles, and to train soldiers for their national defense. It is also granted to friendly governments for general budget use and to finance development projects.

EAST ASIA

1. T
2. T
3. T
4. T
5. F—China has had the fastest-growing economy in the 1990s.
6. T
7. F—Japan trails only Canada as the biggest U.S. trade partners.
8. F—China still has a communist government.
9. F—NATO forces bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Serbia.
10. T
11. The economic struggle common to nations of Asia in the 1990s has been called the "Asian flu."
12. The People's Republic of China subscribes to a "one China" doctrine, claiming that Taiwan is legally part of China and not a separate country.
13. Nations that receive most favored nation (MFN) trade status from the United States are given reductions in tariffs on goods they export to the United States.
14. The Mutual Security Treaty is an agreement signed in 1952 between the United States and Japan that ended U.S. military occupation but committed the United States to defend Japan in case Japan was attacked.
15. The demilitarized zone is a heavily defended strip of territory separating North and South Korea.
16. A consumer advocate would likely urge continued Japanese trade with few restrictions because consumers would benefit from lower prices and high-quality products.
17. An unemployed autoworker would likely urge restrictions on Japanese imports so that U.S. industries, such as the automobile industry, could recover and expand and perhaps restore the autoworker's job.
18. Students must present both a pro and a con argument for all three statements. Their answers must be factual, and teacher judgment is important. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible responses.

EUROPE AND RUSSIA

1. T
2. T
3. T
4. F—NATO was formed in 1949 as an alliance to protect Europe from invasion by communist forces from eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.
5. T
6. F—Yeltsin was elected by the people to be president of Russia.
7. T
8. F—Serbia is the largest republic, and it has sent troops into Bosnia.
9. T
10. T
11. "Euro" is the name of the single European currency that was first introduced in 1999.
12. The Marshall Plan provided billions of dollars in U.S. aid, investment, and trade to rebuild Europe after World War II.

13. The European Union replaced the European Community in 1993 as the organization working toward economic unity in Europe.

14. Boris Yeltsin's dramatic economic policies were called "shock therapy" because they drastically changed the way the Russians had lived under communism.

15. Ethnic cleansing is a term commonly applied to actions in the former Yugoslavia where one ethnic group attempts to drive another from its territory.

16. Students are to give both a pro and a con answer to all three parts. Teacher judgment is important to determine if answers are based on fact or are merely opinion. See "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for possible answers.

17. Students should mention and expand on two of the following changes: the reunification of Germany, the demilitarization of Europe, and the rise of nationalism.

LATIN AMERICA

1. T

2. F—Mexico has been relatively stable politically.

3. T

4. F—Cuba's revolution inspired other revolutionary groups, especially in Central America.

5. F—Present U.S. policy emphasizes increasing free trade in the Western Hemisphere.

6. F—Mexico paid back its IMF loans.

7. T

8. F—Brazil has struggled economically in recent years, and has gotten help from the IMF.

9. T

10. T

11. Puerto Rico became a U.S. commonwealth in 1952, giving it close ties with the United States but keeping it an independent government.

12. A trade embargo is an attempt by a government to keep another nation from trading, in an effort to force that nation to change its behavior.

13. The Reagan Doctrine stated that the United States should strengthen its presence in Central America to prevent communist expansion.

14. The North American Free Trade Agreement would lower or eliminate tariffs on a large portion of U.S. exports to Mexico and Canada.

15. Drug cartels are crime organizations that wield considerable power in Colombia because they make so much money from illegal drug trafficking.

16. Students should give both a pro argument and a con argument for all three statements. Answers will vary but should be based on fact. Teacher judgment is important. Refer to "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for likely responses.

17. Choices could include land ownership by a few families, land reform, unstable governments, civil war, lack of education, unemployment, and other social and economic problems.

18. The Helms-Burton Act seeks to prevent other nations from trading with Cuba by punishing them when they do. U.S. trading partners said that the United States should not be able to tell them with whom they can or cannot trade.

THE MIDDLE EAST

1. T

2. T

3. F—The United States was one of the first nations to officially recognize Israel.

4. F—Nasser's attempt failed.

5. F—Egypt is the most populous country in the Middle East, with more than 55 million people.

6. F—Khomeini moved away from the "Westernization" started by the shah and moved Iran's government toward Islamic fundamentalism.

7. F—The agreement gave limited authority to Palestinians in the occupied territories but did not promise them a homeland.

8. T

9. F—Thousands of Israelis have settled in the West Bank.

10. T

11. Zionism was a political movement founded in 1897 to create a homeland for Jews.

12. The PLO was formed in 1964 to lead the fight for the creation of a Palestinian state.

13. The Oslo Accords were historic agreements between the PLO and Israel reached in 1993.

14. The *intifada* was a violent protest against the presence of Israeli soldiers in the occupied territories by Palestinians who live there.

15. The Camp David Accords established a framework for peace in the Middle East. President Carter brought together the leaders of Egypt and Israel at the presidential retreat at Camp David, Maryland.

16. Students are to write both a pro and a con response to each of the three statements. Their answers must be factual, and teacher judgment is important. Refer to "The Debate" at the end of the chapter for likely responses.

17. Palestinians would say that their ancestors have been living in the region for hundreds of years and that the Israelis forced them from their homes in Palestine in 1948, and may say that the only way to get back their land is to fight. Israelis would say that their nation was legally established by the United Nations and that they have a right to it, that the land was given to them by God thousands of years ago, and that they will fight to hold on to it.

STUDENT HANDOUTS

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THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Learning About Congress

As you read the "Congress" chapter, look for answers to the following questions.

1. What was historically important about the 105th Congress? The 106th Congress?

2. What is divided government? What are some disadvantages to having divided government? What are some advantages?

3. What legislation did the 105th Congress and President Clinton agree on? What issues did they not agree on?

4. Why do some Americans want to limit the amount of money a candidate may spend to run for office? Why has it been difficult for Congress to pass campaign reform legislation?

5. What is a political action committee (PAC)? Why do some Americans want to do away with campaign contributions made by PACs? Why do some Americans think PACs are valuable to the election and legislative processes?

6. What functions did each house of Congress perform in the impeachment proceedings against President Clinton? How did their outcomes differ? How were their outcomes similar?

Using *Current Issues* and other sources, answer the following questions.

7. Who is the speaker of the House of Representatives? Who is the minority leader in the House of Representatives?

8. Name the two U.S. senators who represent your state.

9. Name the member of the U.S. House of Representatives who represents your district.

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THE FEDERAL BUDGET

Ranking the Budget

Listed below are twenty categories of federal programs. You are the budget director and must present the final budget to the president. Rank the programs in order of priority using the number 1 for the most important item, down to number 20 for the least important. Also indicate the percentage of the federal budget that you want to devote to each category. You may eliminate any programs you believe unnecessary and add any you believe essential.

Priority Rank	Percent of Budget	
		Defense
		Foreign aid (technical, military, humanitarian)
		Social Security increases
		Subsidized housing for people with low incomes
		Subsidy payments to farmers to maintain stable prices and inexpensive food
		Food stamps
		Space research and technology
		Highway construction
		Expanding Medicare
		Aid to education
		Urban mass transportation
		Unemployment benefits
		Energy research
		Veterans' benefits
		Drug control
		Environmental concerns (pollution control)
		Student loans
		Health research (AIDS, cancer, etc.)
		Cost of living raises for government workers
		Crime control (aid to states and local governments for law enforcement, training, and corrections)

After you have ranked the budget items, write a paragraph stating what you think will be the economic, social, and political implications of your budget.

1. Economic implications

2. Social implications

3. Political implications

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CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Constitutional Amendments

Complete the chart using information from "Constitutional Rights" in *Current Issues*, a copy of the Bill of Rights, and any other available sources.

Amendment Topic	Purpose	Supreme Court Decisions About the Amendment
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

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STUDENT HANDOUT 4

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Topic Research

Name of topic: ____________________________________

1. Why is your topic important?

2. What problems or issues does your topic pose?

3. List the positions that can be taken in regard to your topic.

4. What arguments can be offered to support each position?

5. What evidence did you find to support those arguments?

6. Who might be influenced by each position? How might they be influenced?

7. What are the costs to society of each position?

8. What are the benefits to society of each position?

9. What additional information would you like to have before making a policy recommendation? Where might you find this information?

10. What are your recommendations on this issue?

11. What steps can you take to promote the adoption of your policy?

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STUDENT HANDOUT 5

CRIME AND DRUGS

Community Crime Survey

Survey five members of your community, asking each respondent whether he or she agrees or disagrees. Write each respondent's initials in the appropriate column, fitting the responses of all survey participants on this page.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Crime is a serious problem in my neighborhood.		
2. Stricter punishment and stronger law enforcement will reduce crime in the United States.		
3. There are circumstances when juveniles should be tried as adults.		
4. Unemployment and poverty are the indirect causes of most crime.		
5. Drug use and the drug trade are the causes of most crime.		
6. Strict gun control laws will curb violent crime.		
7. The right to own a gun is protected by the U.S. Constitution.		
8. Most people who are arrested for committing violent crimes go to prison.		
9. People who have been found guilty of at least three violent crimes should be imprisoned for life.		
10. People convicted of drug-related crimes should be sent to prison for a mandatory length of time.		
11. Government should spend more money on drug prevention and less on punishment for drug users and traffickers.		
12. Americans should be willing to give up some of their traditional freedoms so that the government can better fight domestic terrorism.		

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STUDENT HANDOUT 6

THE ECONOMY

Cause/Effect Relationships

Explain the relationship between each of the events in the pairs listed below. How can one cause the other to occur?

1. a. Productivity (production per worker per hour) is higher in a foreign nation than in the United States.
   b. Products made in that nation cost less than equivalent U.S. products.

2. a. The economies in many Asian countries go into recession.
   b. Unemployment in the United States increases.

3. a. The federal government spends more than it takes in each year in taxes.
   b. Interest rates for consumer loans increase.

4. a. Interest rates increase.
   b. Employment opportunities decrease.

5. a. Inflation is high.
   b. Fewer bank loans are available.

6. a. The government reduces taxes.
   b. Employment rises.

7. a. Unemployment rises in the United States.
   b. The federal budget deficit increases.

8. a. A company gains a monopoly on a commonly used product.
   b. Consumer costs go up.

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EDUCATION

Research Outline

Use this handout to gather information you need to prepare a mock television report.

Topic:______________________________

1. What are problems or areas of possible improvement?

2. What changes do I recommend?

3. Who will be influenced by my proposed changes?

4. How will they be influenced by my changes?

5. What are the benefits of my proposed changes?

6. What are the possible negative aspects of my proposed changes?

7. Other information:

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HEALTH CARE AND AGING

Student Survey

You may work together to find the correct response for each of the following true/false statements. Use any source of information necessary to determine if the statement is true or false. If you cannot find the information, write down the answer you think is correct.

____ 1. In some states, family health insurance costs have risen as much as 400 percent since 1980.

____ 2. The average cost of a heart transplant is about $162,000.

____ 3. Lifetime care for AIDS patients costs an average of $100,000 per patient.

____ 4. The health care industry accounts for about one-seventh of the nation's economy.

____ 5. People with low incomes are significantly less healthy than others.

____ 6. Federal, state, and local governments pay almost 50 percent of [illegible] health care costs.

____ 7. By 2000, the nation's health care bill will approach $1.5 trillion.

____ 8. About 43 million Americans have no health insurance.

____ 9. In 1997, the federal government spent almost $170 billion on Medicaid.

____ 10. In the early stages of pregnancy, low-income women are less likely to see a doctor than are middle- or high-income women.

____ 11. Low-income men are 40 percent more likely to die of heart diseases than are middle- or high-income men.

____ 12. By 2020, older Americans will account for about 20 percent of the U.S. population.

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STUDENT HANDOUT 9

IMMIGRATION

Immigration Candidates

You are a member of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Your task is to screen people who are interested in immigrating to the United States. All the candidates described below would like to enter the United States, but under current U.S. law, immigration is limited and restricted. In the space provided, explain why each of the following persons should or should not be allowed to enter the United States as a permanent resident.

William Babington Jr.—Thirty-nine years old; single; born and lived in Great Britain all his life; a college-educated engineer with a special skill in computer science. He carries the HIV virus.

José Mendoza—Forty-five years old; married with five children; native of Mexico; forced off his land by low agricultural prices and high inflation; willing to accept any job; desires that his children be given educational opportunities that he never had. He and members of his family cannot speak English.

Juan Garcia—Twenty-five-year-old Cuban who has been a star baseball pitcher for the Cuban national team. He is assured of a multimillion-dollar contract from the major league team that signed his brother, who defected to the United States in 1996. He speaks no English.

Ajit Patel—Twenty-nine years old; trained as a medical doctor in India; would like to come to America and begin a practice in pediatrics. His wife, Vanchhana, is a registered nurse. Both speak English, and they have no children.

Phethsana Luangkhoth—Thirty-seven-year-old native of Thailand; owns the successful sandal manufacturing plant in which he first started working as a child. Married with three children. No one in the family speaks English.

Mayrling Reformado—Fifty-five-year-old Filipina civil rights worker; imprisoned twice by a former Philippine government; was a member of the current administration until she began speaking out against civil rights abuses. She fears that if she stays in the Philippines her life may be in danger. She is well educated and bilingual, and she wants to live with her daughter in Texas.

Zbigniew Stawowy—Forty-year-old native of Poland; fed up with the religious intolerance he and his family have experienced. As a Jew, he often finds himself and his people being blamed for the economic hard times. He is a baker by trade, and everyone in his family speaks English. He has two brothers who live in Chicago.

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THE MEDIA

What Ifs About the Media

Read each of the introductory paragraphs and then answer the "what if" questions. Write your response in the space following each item.

John Peter Zenger was accused of committing seditious libel because he published articles criticizing the English governor of New York. He was acquitted. Later, freedom of the press was guaranteed under the First Amendment, because the nation's founders believed that the people should have a right to express themselves freely without fear of government reprisal.

What if:

1. Zenger had been found guilty and all colonial newspapers had been closely censored or shut down?
2. the nation's founders, knowing they would likely be in positions of power in the government, had not extended freedom of the press to criticism of the government or elected officials?
3. sedition laws were still in force?

While the media were given free rein to travel into combat zones in Vietnam and send both audio and video reports back home, reporters' movements and access to combat in the Persian Gulf War were quite restricted.

What if:

1. the U.S. military and government had closely restricted journalists in Vietnam and censored the reports that went in newspapers and on television in the United States?
2. reporters had been given unrestricted access to combat zones and commanders during the Persian Gulf War?
3. news about troop movement and combat plans in the Persian Gulf had been openly reported before they actually happened?

Television has changed the way political campaigns are run. The Kennedy/Nixon debate opened the door for many other similar televised debates, and now all candidates realize that they need to use television if they are going to get elected.

What if:

1. Nixon had appeared well rested and clean shaven and Kennedy had looked tired and drawn?
2. television networks refused to broadcast presidential debates during prime time because they did not want to lose the huge revenue from companies that sponsor entertainment programs watched by millions of fans?
3. a presidential candidate refused to debate his or her opponent on television but preferred rather to use the time making a televised speech?

Millions of people get their news from sources on the Internet; others can watch news as it happens twenty-four hours a day on television. New telecommunication technology has speeded up the dissemination of news and some of the "new media" are interactive; people can talk back to their news sources almost instantaneously.

What if:

1. competition among "new media" outlets threatened the accuracy and quality of the news?
2. tabloid journalism replaced traditional journalism?
3. Internet news sources fell by the wayside as they found the public did not trust their reports and they could not compete financially with more powerful outlets such as television, radio, and newspapers?

Investigation by two reporters into a break-in at the Watergate office complex in Washington, D.C., led to a discovery of wider political wrongdoing by President Nixon and members of his administration. Nixon ultimately resigned, and many of his advisers were found guilty of various crimes.

What if:

1. the reporters had given up on their investigation, thinking that it was simply a burglary gone bad with no political implications?
2. the attempted cover-up of Watergate and related activities by members of the Nixon administration had been successful?
3. President Nixon had told the American people early in the investigation that some of his people had masterminded the break-in and that they had been fired and would be punished?

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STUDENT HANDOUT 11

POVERTY

Supporting Generalizations with Facts

The following statements are generalizations based on the information found in "Poverty" in *Current Issues.* If you agree with the generalization, list facts supporting it. If you disagree with the generalization, list facts refuting it.

1. Low-income Americans cannot get along without the federal guarantee of financial assistance.

2. Giving tax credits to the working poor will keep them off welfare.

3. Government welfare perpetuates poverty instead of combating it.

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WOMEN AND MINORITIES

Discrimination Cases

Read each of the following fictional cases. Place a C in the blank if you think the ruling was correct and a W if you think it was wrong. Be ready to explain why you believe as you do.

____ 1. When an opening developed in a large corporation for a high-paying job, a less qualified white female employee got the promotion over a more qualified Hispanic man. In getting the promotion, the woman became the highest-ranking woman in the company. The Hispanic man sued the company, demanding that he be given the job because he was more qualified. The white female employee countered by saying that if demoted she would have to go back to a job that paid considerably less.

The court ruled in favor of the Hispanic man.

____ 2. An African-American man was unable to get a promotion because he did not have the training necessary for the higher-level job. The reason for his lack of training was that his company discriminated against African Americans in its training programs years ago. He sued, demanding a promotion along with the special training needed for him to succeed in the higher-level job.

The court said he did not deserve the job because the company's job training program no longer discriminates. But the court also ruled that the company now had to train him and promote him the next time an appropriate job came along.

____ 3. A woman employed in manufacturing was unable to get a promotion in Company A because she lacked the training necessary for a higher-level job. However, she lacked training because she had been discriminated against by her previous employer—Company B. She sued Company B, demanding monetary compensation.

The court ruled against Company B and gave the woman the money.

____ 4. An African-American man working in industry was unable to get a promotion because his poor education made him less qualified than a white male applicant. His poor education was the result of attending inferior, segregated schools in the South in the 1950s. He went to court, claiming that federal affirmative action guidelines entitled him to the promotion. His company argued that even though they would like to promote him, he simply was not qualified to do the job.

The court, citing federal guidelines, ordered the company to give the man the promotion and the training necessary to qualify him for the job.

____ 5. A Mexican-American woman, who recently became a citizen of the United States, was denied a promotion because her poor education made her less qualified than a white female applicant. Her poor education was the result of growing up in a nonsupportive environment in Mexico where her family was poor, her father abandoned the family at an early age, and she was never encouraged to excel in school. She went to court seeking the promotion under federal affirmative action guidelines, but her company argued that although they like to promote minorities, this woman simply did not have the skills to do the job.

The court agreed with the company, saying that the wrongs done to her did not take place in the United States, but rather in Mexico when she was a child. The court also said that, now that she is a citizen of the United States, she has an excellent opportunity to improve her skills and make herself more employable.

____ 6. An African-American woman's application to a highly competitive medical school was rejected because other applicants had higher scores on their entrance exams. Her father—a doctor—sent her to private schools and the state university. She did well in college, but could not quite score high enough to gain entry into the medical school she desired. She sued for entry under affirmative action guidelines.

The court ordered the school to admit her over several higher-scoring white males.

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DEFENSE

Defense Survey

Directions: For each item below, indicate with a check whether you agree or disagree. Be prepared to explain your position.

	Agree	Disagree
1. The best way to protect national security is to make and keep the United States the strongest military power in the world.		
2. Because the economic well-being of the nation depends on securing adequate quantities of oil, the United States should do whatever is necessary to safeguard its sources.		
3. The United States should become part of a UN peacekeeping mission if such a force is necessary to maintain peace in a far-off country.		
4. The greatest threat to national security today is not military warfare, but economic warfare.		
5. It is in the best interests of the United States to encourage the fledgling democratic movements around the world by providing generous economic and technical assistance.		
6. Environmental disasters like oil spills, the greenhouse effect, and the destruction of the rainforest, while tragic and regrettable, have very little effect on the national security of the United States.		
7. Reducing the defense budget below its present level would seriously jeopardize American security.		
8. The United States should invest more money in high-tech versions of traditional weapons.		

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DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This universal declaration of human rights as common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of member states themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional, or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing, or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offense has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offense was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from nonpolitical crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality, or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage, and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to a realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work, and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration insuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts, and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary, or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society. (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group, or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

After reading the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, answer the following questions.

1. The declaration identifies three kinds of rights: (1) economic—rights dealing with survival and security; (2) cultural—rights dealing with dignity and self-respect; and (3) political—rights dealing with participation in the political process and control over one's own life. Under each of the three categories below, list three rights that you consider most important.

Economic	Cultural	Political
a.	a.	a.
b.	b.	b.
c.	c.	c.

2. What are the similarities between the U.S. Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? What are some differences between the two documents?

3. If the members of the United Nations knew the rights they listed in the declaration were more idealistic than realistic, why do you think they bothered to write them down? Are such rights attainable? Why or why not?

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THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Costs and Benefits of Protecting the World's Environment

Action: Officials from many of the world's leading industrial nations, including the United States, announce plans to allow construction of hundreds of new nuclear power plants.

Sides: Advocates of Nuclear Power Plants vs. Advocates of Coal-Fired Power Plants

	Costs	Benefits
Nuclear power plants		
Coal-fired power plants		

Action: The U.S. Senate ratifies the Kyoto global warming treaty.

Sides: Industry Executives from the United States vs. Industry Executives from a Developing Country

	Costs	Benefits
United States		
The developing nation		

Action: Congress reauthorizes the Endangered Species Act.

Sides: Conservation Biologists vs. Business Developers and Farmers

	Costs	Benefits
Conservation biologists		
Business developers and farmers		

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Fact-Finding Sheet

You have been asked to develop and defend a comprehensive plan for reducing the trade deficit. To do this, you must evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of one of the approaches being considered by the president. Consider the steps necessary to implement your approach and what factors might make it difficult to make the approach work. This fact-finding sheet will assist you with your evaluation. Answer each of the following questions.

Approach: ______________________________

1. What are the strengths of this approach?

2. What are its weaknesses?

3. How likely is this approach to be adopted?

4. What factors might block it from being adopted?

5. What would have to occur for this approach to be accepted?

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STUDENT HANDOUT 17

WEAPONS PROLIFERATION

Community Survey

Ask three people in your community the following questions and record their responses. You should poll (1) a high school student; (2) a person between the ages of 30 and 50; and (3) a person over 60. Record each person's answer by indicating his or her age with a code: HS for high school group; MA for 30–50 group; SC for over 60 group.

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
1. The world is more dangerous now than it was during the Cold War.			
2. Nations like China, North Korea, and Iran pose major threats to the United States.			
3. The United States should greatly reduce its stockpile of nuclear weapons.			
4. The United States should not sell nuclear technology and materials to other countries.			
5. The United States should not sell conventional weapons to other countries.			
6. The United States should develop a national missile defense system.			

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STUDENT HANDOUT 18

WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

Cost/Benefit Chart

Complete the cost/benefit chart for each issue.

1. The United States should eliminate foreign aid.

	Costs	Benefits
United States		
Less developed countries		

2. The United States should give more money to the International Monetary Fund to help countries with distressed economies.

	Costs	Benefits
United States		
Less developed countries		

3. The United States should promote family planning in less developed countries to slow population growth.

	Costs	Benefits
United States		
Less developed countries		

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EUROPE AND RUSSIA

U.S. Response

Read the following scenarios and the possible U.S. responses if such events occurred. Then choose the response with which you most agree and write a brief statement explaining your position.

War in Kosovo

Scenario: After negotiating a shaky peace between Serbia and the Kosovars, NATO troops are allowed to occupy parts of Kosovo to keep the peace and insure the safe return of refugees. However, heavy fighting between Serbian troops and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) breaks out, and NATO troops come under fire from Serbian military units.

Response: The United States could:

1. enlist more NATO aid and send its and NATO's troops into combat to attempt to force a change in Serbian leadership and full military victory over the Serbian army.

2. instruct its and NATO's soldiers to only defend themselves, but give sophisticated arms to the weaker KLA to even up the sides.

3. withdraw from Kosovo and allow the two sides to fight it out.

4. call leaders from both sides together and attempt to negotiate another cease-fire and peace agreement.

NATO Military Expansion and U.S.-Russian Relations

Scenario: As U.S. and NATO troops prepare to send ground troops and armor into Kosovo to drive Serbian military units out of the region, Russian president Boris Yeltsin deploys thousands of Russian troops as close to Serbia as possible and sends his Black Sea fleet toward the Adriatic Sea. He warns President Clinton that Russia will give military aid to Serbia if NATO troops invade Kosovo.

Response: The United States could:

1. postpone sending ground troops into Kosovo and attempt to convince Yeltsin to use his influence with Serbia to bring peace to the region.

2. offer Yeltsin and Russia membership in NATO if he cooperates with the alliance in bringing peace to Yugoslavia.

3. let the deployment take place and call Yeltsin's bluff, warning him that his actions could be seen as an act of war.

4. give up on the idea of bringing peace to Kosovo and withdraw all forces from the region.

Economic Aid to Russia

Scenario: Economic progress in Russia comes to a halt; unemployment shoots up, inflation is out of hand, and hundreds of factories and businesses close. Communist parties gain strength as they recruit disgruntled workers with promises of a return to the socialist safety net of the old days. Desperate government leaders appeal to the United States for economic aid to ward off economic depression and a return to power by the communists.

Response: The United States could:

1. give millions of dollars in emergency aid to Russia in the hope of jump-starting its faltering economy.

2. promise no government aid, but urge U.S. and other foreign industries to pump money and technology into Russia as soon as possible.

3. ignore the plea for aid, voice support of the elected government, and let whatever happens happen.

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LATIN AMERICA

U.S.–Latin American Relations

U.S. relations with most Latin American nations have been influenced by historical events or present conditions. Use the information in the "Latin America" chapter of *Current Issues* and other resources available to you to answer the first three questions in each section. Then, using your best judgment to answer the last question, speculate on how U.S. relations with each country might change, given different circumstances.

United States and Mexico

1. Why are friendly relations between the United States and Mexico important to both countries?
2. What problems and events have sometimes strained U.S.-Mexican relations?
3. What could the United States do to improve relations with Mexico? What could Mexico do to improve relations with the United States?
4. How would relations between the two countries be affected if the border between them was as open as the border between the United States and Canada?

United States and Cuba

1. What events caused the present strained relations between the United States and Cuba?
2. How has Cuba been hurt by U.S. relations toward it the past forty years? How has the United States been hurt by these relations?
3. What could the United States do to improve relations with Cuba? What could Cuba do to improve relations with the United States?
4. How would relations between the United States and Cuba be affected if Fidel Castro abandoned communism, held free elections, and established a capitalist economy?

United States and Colombia

1. What situation has brought about the less-than-friendly relations between the United States and Colombia?
2. What actions could Colombia's government take to make it more trustworthy to U.S. officials?
3. What actions could the U.S. government take to help Colombia's government become stronger and more effective?
4. How would relations between the United States and Colombia be affected if the United States legalized the sale of narcotics?

THE MIDDLE EAST

Middle East Peace Proposals

Nation or interest group you represent: ______________________________

1. What is your primary objective?

2. What would be the ideal resolution of this situation for you?

3. What would be an acceptable compromise for you?

4. What outcomes would you be unwilling to accept?

5. What are you willing to offer to please all of the groups concerned?

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